1992

Journals of a stranger: documents of a life

John David Storey

University of Wollongong

Recommended Citation

NOTE

This online version of the thesis may have different page formatting and pagination from the paper copy held in the University of Wollongong Library.

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

COPYRIGHT WARNING

You may print or download ONE copy of this document for the purpose of your own research or study. The University does not authorise you to copy, communicate or otherwise make available electronically to any other person any copyright material contained on this site. You are reminded of the following:

Copyright owners are entitled to take legal action against persons who infringe their copyright. A reproduction of material that is protected by copyright may be a copyright infringement. A court may impose penalties and award damages in relation to offences and infringements relating to copyright material. Higher penalties may apply, and higher damages may be awarded, for offences and infringements involving the conversion of material into digital or electronic form.
JOURNALS OF A STRANGER:
DOCUMENTS OF A LIFE.

A written submission in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of
the degree of

DOCTOR OF CREATIVE ARTS

from

THE UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

by

JOHN DAVID ROY STOREY BA

SCHOOL OF CREATIVE ARTS

1992
JOURNALS OF A STRANGER:
DOCUMENTS OF A LIFE.

Book One.
Contents.

Book One.
Abstract. 4
Introduction. 5
1. Overview to the DCA program. 7
2. Contemporary Practice: Writing and Photography. 22
3. Diaries, Journals, Biographies: Evidence of a life. 49
4. Intimacy. 67
5. Gender. 87
6. Landscape. 102
7. Journey. 112
8. Exhibition Documentation. 126
9. Swimming with sharks: Nine Stories. 133
10. The Daybooks of Eddy Avenue. 201
11. Images of Manhood. 222
12. Tests in Large Format and Type-C Prints. 226
13. Specifications. 228
14. Conclusion. 230

Book Two.
Bibliography. 4
Illustrations 20
Abstract.

Journals of a stranger: documents of a life, is a fictional diary of an unknown and unnamed person. The work is a discontinuous, dual narrative. Within its six parts the reader is given clues and insights to the nature of the diarist.

The work is primarily concerned to investigate the notion of a 'life'. Specifically, the ways in which such a metaphor is expressed both visually, and within written text. The significant areas explored--visual and written expressions of intimacy, representations of gender, the renderings of landscape and the use of journey as theme--are the vantage points from which this 'life' is viewed. It is axiomatic that on each viewing the nuance will have changed.

Journals of a stranger is a work that draws on the disciplines of writing and photography. A central aspect of the work is the interplay of image with text. In that sense, the work uses an interdisciplinary structure, exploring the tensions, and/or relatedness, of sequences of images interspersed with a fragmented, fictional text.
Introduction.

The approach adopted within this documentation of the journals has been to discuss the themes that surrounded the project. As well, I have placed the work within the contemporary setting.

The DCA Program, journals of a stranger: documents of a life, has taken over five years to complete, undergoing several major changes during that time. In order to adequately, and appropriately, present the final work, as well as show significant aspects of its evolution, I have structured the document as follows.

Book One.

Chapter 1 provides an overview to the project, charting the development of the final work from its beginnings as the Master of Arts (Hons) program, The Manhood Project.

Chapter 2 examines the contemporary context of the work, looking at current writing, publishing and photography.

Chapter 3 examines the theme of personal writing. It is intended to provide a background to the basic structure of the work.

Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 examine the thematic basis of the work. For analytical reasons these areas--intimacy, gender, landscape and journey--have been presented as separate chapters. However, they overlap and inter-relate throughout the work. They represent the key concepts of the work.

Chapter 8 documents the two exhibitions produced for this submission.

Chapter 9 contains the collection of short stories, written for the work, titled Swimming with Sharks. A title later used within the final work.
Chapter 10 contains the fictional writing for the earlier work, The Daybooks of Eddy Avenue: Astral Traveller.

Chapter 11 contains material from the first M.A. (Hons) submission, Images of Manhood.

Chapter 12 contains material not included in the final submission. Not only does this work document the background experimentation undertaken for the journals of a stranger, it also shows some possible directions for work after the DCA is completed.

Chapter 13 provides a short summing up of the major themes of the final work.

**Book Two.**

To fill out the discussion I have included a bibliography and a range of illustrative material, chiefly examples of the work of photographers mentioned in the text.

In general, I would note, it is not my intention to examine the work on a page by page, image by image basis. To do so would break up the integrity of the work. Further more, such an analysis would not, in my opinion, yield any more information or understanding of the work. Let me state clearly, I am not trying to mystify the work with such an approach. Rather, I hope to provide an examination of it that does not destroy those qualities of intimacy and observation upon which the work is built.
Chapter 1. Overview to the DCA. Program.

This DCA Program has undergone a great deal of change since the first proposal, *Images of Manhood*. It is informative to survey that process, for it reveals the creative development of the *journals of a stranger*.

Initially, the *Manhood Project* was to be presented for a Master of Arts (Hons). The nature of the project changed, becoming *The Daybooks of Eddy Avenue: Astral Traveller*. After a successful application to convert the degree I was enrolled within the Doctorate of Creative Arts program, June 1989. The final and complete title of the program being *journals of a stranger: documents of a life*.

*Images of Manhood* was grounded within the traditions of documentary photography. The style being intentionally direct, seemingly uncontrived, attempting by a certain formalist quality to place emphasis on the sitter, as opposed to the particular qualities of the photograph. This approach has an almost ethnographic basis, seeking to describe the sitter in terms of dress, presence, environment and so forth.

Certainly there was reference to the work of August Sander. He attempted to document the people of pre-World War II Germany, a project halted by the Nazi Government. Sander operated from a traditional documentary position, trying to record a considered representation. He felt his photographs were faithful records of the German people. Needless to say, this was out of line with the new Germany of the Third Reich (Fig. 1).

Sander wanted to present an almost scientific catalogue of people, defining in a visual manner, the German nation. But as John Szarkowski ironically observed,

> The idea, in principle, was typical of the nineteenth-century Teutonic affection for sorting and cataloguing, a Linnaean approach to

1. Overview to the journals.
knowledge that has given us systemic biology, art history, phrenology, and worse. The greatness of Sander lies not in his outline, but in his pictures, which give us not only generic types but unique individuals. 1

Images of Manhood operated from a highly personal standpoint. The notion of objectivity being of little relevance. The subjects were chosen at my discretion, without any pretence to sociological sampling techniques. They were to be people that I felt were of importance and interest. The project was concerned with those who may be regarded as atypical, or even marginal. In time, two observations became clear in my mind.

Firstly, I could, through the association of images and the use of style, set up a series of photographs that inferred a particular quality on the sitter, such as marginal social status, almost regardless of their actual social position. 2 In the Foreword to his monumental book of portraits, In The American West, (Fig. 2) Avedon remarked,

A portrait is not a likeness. The moment an emotion or fact is transformed into a photograph it is no longer a fact but an opinion. 3

Secondly, the visual qualities of the work were becoming repetitive and narrow. The flatness of style produced a sameness, homogenising the faces into an averaged 'house' style. Interestingly, this often happens with portrait photographers. The pictures tell more about the photographer than the sitter.

The project was planned to involve about forty portraits which would have been presented in book form. They would have been accompanied by a compilation of excerpts, taken from interviews conducted at the time of shooting. The written section would have comprised a freely collaged selection of comments and observations from the interviews. 4

I had hoped to investigate self definitions of masculinity. The Manhood series was concerned to explore, and make reference to, the larger issues of gender. Although no women were to be photographed, the interviews often explored relationships between men and women.

1. Overview to the journals.
Holland, Spence and Watney argue for close of examination of the imaging of gender, for as they say,

In this way ideology becomes fleshed out, capitalism constructs its subjects...our subjectivity's and economic positions continue to be polarised by the tyranny of gendering, as if this stemmed automatically and inexorably from the mere fact of sexual difference. 5

More specifically Wilkinson described the process like this,

I want to suggest that masculinity and femininity are ideological practices all the more effective because they appear as natural and inevitable results of biology or experience. The appearance of something coherent which could be explained as a property of the individual is precisely the effect of this ideological movement. 6

Or, as one of the men interviewed put it, 'I don't think about it much.' 7

While the Manhood project was based within this theoretical understanding, I was not concerned to engage an academic debate on the nature of that process. Within the framework that I was working, an emphasis was placed on the effects of environment. This allows the clear possibility for the change, adaptation and the diversity so evident in any examination of the field. A model that primarily looked to 'natural', apparently innate, qualities of gender seemed to me locked into a fixed structure. There is not much room to move in relation to social change, or difference, within such socio-economic models. 8

Indeed, the real debate is one of percentages, not of absolutes. Both nature and nurture, environment and inheritance, are commonly regarded as the major factors. It's the weighting of importance that is open to research and discussion. Not that it is as simple as this makes it all sound. Neither position is clear or uncluttered, and research is still keenly pursued across the whole field. 9

In his book The Construction of Homosexuality David Greenberg discusses with great erudition the implications of various social models for understanding 'deviant' groups. He explores at length sociological models of gender, and the so-named deviations from its 'natural' expressions. He makes the point that

1. Overview to the journals.
even though we can argue that systems of classification can be seen as having alternatives in other cultures, or historical periods, and that classification systems are not reflective, necessarily, of innate characteristics, we still have to deal with the social constructions that we live in.

Had I been born in a different country or different era, my ideas would no doubt be very different from what they are now, but that doesn’t mean that at the snap of the finger I could be thinking like a Hindu or a medieval Frenchman. The modern Western system of sexual classification is embodied in social identities, roles, institutions, and ways of life that can hardly be abolished by an arbitrary act of will.

I was interested in looking at the individual’s experiences, considering the ways in which they presented and expressed their manhood as a response, be it intended or unconscious, to their surroundings of time and culture.

It is important to state that the work was an artistic exploration, rather than a sociological discussion. There was never any need to work to statistical profile or sample. The thrust was particular, idiosyncratic and impressionistic. I had intended to explore personalised maps of masculinity.

I wanted to avoid a simple restatement, in contemporary terms, of photographers such as Atget or Sander (Fig 1 and 3). That is, a form of traditional documentary approach.

The images I produced were always intended to be seen in conjunction with the interviews. The photographs were given a context. There was an amplification of the simple document of the image. When considered together (the project was intended to have its primary form as a book of photos with text) the issues of gender and identity become dense and layered.

The theoretical impetus was quite removed from some exposition of the 'politics of guilt', or some flaccid assertion of the sensitivity of the 'new age' man. One of the leading satirists of these two positions being the cartoonist, Kaz Cooke (Fig 4).

1. Overview to the journals.
Concurrently with this project I had become interested in a more fluid approach to photography. Rather than being a departure from the original position, it was a development. I had become increasingly aware of the visual possibilities, and shortcomings, of the Manhood Project.

Late in 1987 I produced a one person exhibition under the title, Pictures from The New World. This project explored the seemingly invisible nature of the memorial fighter planes, set in concrete, around the parks of Wagga Wagga. Some stood in absurd reconstructions of flight, while others were placed incongruously near suburban back yards.

There was a quite striking poignancy in their near invisible status. It seemed the populace ignored, not only their original, intended meaning, but also their larger significance. These were relics from the 'most hideous and inexplicable moments of some people's lives' (both enemy and pilot).

Close inspection revealed these planes to be remarkably humanoid in some respects. Their underbellies seemed almost muscular in form. The photographs explored these humanoid qualities, as well as referring to their territories of car parks, take away food restaurants and fibro houses.

However, the discrepancies that I felt were present in the Manhood project, that is the flatness of the images as opposed to the richness of the text, were made clear to me when I produced a small series of work under the title Nightsites.

These photographs explored the visual qualities of a living space at night, when the house lights were turned off. The area being lit by the stray ambient light that was thrown in from the street.

But it is still night, that night to fill before breakfast. A night glittering across the million lights awake, electronically awake, the soul of modernism lighting up my insomnia.

This seemed to open up a great many opportunities for the investigation of a person's identity, as shown by the altered, random illumination of their darkened surroundings. The metaphor of the subconscious as a darkened room is trite at

1. Overview to the journals.
the written level, yet quite powerful as a visual suggestion, a leitmotif running through a series of photographs.

At the centre of the Manhood project was an interest with identity and its representation. There appeared to me a strong link between these projects that could be strengthened by exploring the details of the subject's living spaces. The photographs could look at these sites in an almost archaeological manner, examining the sense of place, the tangible evidence of occupation. In an ill defined way these material objects are like manifestations of thought, intention and motivation.

I have always been fascinated by the work of French photographer, Eugene Atget, who, up to the mid-1920s, documented Paris (Fig 3). His work was not widely known until after his death. He remains a somewhat mysterious figure, his motivations are not clear. The photographs themselves are strong, yet strangely impersonal.

Atget's work takes the viewer through his personal view of the city. Architectural details, rooms, streets, spaces and so on are presented without explanation. The effect is both engaging, yet distanced.

However, unlike Atget's personal distance from the image, I wanted to infuse my photographs with a more obvious human consciousness. In redefining my work I was concerned to draw together these concepts of identity and place, gender and its representation, and their related areas, into a project that would allow a freer exploration of the visual content.

From these problems and contradictions emerged the second phase of my work, The Daybooks of Eddy Avenue: Astral Traveller.

This concept involved a diary, a journal in words and photographs, that centred on the astral travels of the diarist, Eddy Avenue. During the normal course of his life he is taken on various trips or voyages, apparently within his mind. The central device for the work was the notion of astral travel.

It seemed important that the work was not lost in the realms of dream analysis. This can be a laborious and overworked area, certainly at least, it did not appear

1. Overview to the journals.
appropriate for this project. I liked the gently absurd notion of astral travel, a voyage outside the body. The literature of such phenomena ranges from the impeccable to the banal. I was not concerned to locate a position within that body of writing. It was intended as a simple, somewhat playful device to carry the central themes of the work.

While The Daybooks of Eddy Avenue was, in many respects, a substantial work, it proved too difficult to sustain the lightness of tone. Structurally, and conceptually, the Daybooks worked best as a shorter piece, becoming laboured if extended over the several volumes. The change to journals of a stranger seemed a natural shift. In creating an unnamed diarist, with a mobile gender, the work was freed up, to allow a greater shift and variation in qualities of text and image. However, the central concerns and thematic bases of the earlier projects are embedded within journals of a stranger.

The following discussion, therefore, provides a necessary orientation for journals of a stranger, and should be seen as relating directly to that final work: the intimate record of a life, in photographs and fragmented text.

No winter in Dreamland;
Thermometers stand at blood heat. 17

I was never interested in the literal fact of astral travel, it was always intended as the ' device ' to carry the content. The central theme of the Daybooks project was the journey of one person through a range of experiences, that were interspersed throughout his normal life. As Auden suggests, the world of dreams is as palpable an experience as any that humans pass through. For Eddy Avenue it was also an exploration of his life, relationships, and lots of things he could not fit into any particular area of his existence. Dreams are often a cocktail of identifiable incidents, experiences and the strange, barely known world of the subconscious.

An inner journey, a voyage outside one’s normal existence, one that reveals or suggests to the traveller insights about him or herself, is one of the commonest in art. One could cite examples of this theme in works as diverse as Dante’s Divine Comedy and Leunig’s cartoons (Fig 5).

1. Overview to the journals.
Leunig's Mr Curly deals in a poignant, whimsical manner with the issues of his life. He struggles to sort out the juxtapositions of an alienating world of rude, aggressive people that impinge on his quiet life. His own world is often a sad place of little rooms with pictures of sunsets, imitations of the real sunset outside the window, of winding roads that lead over rounded hills to the breaking dawn, and precious small experiences of self discovery that reveal profound insights to his own existence. 18

Leunig's cartoons are a delicate balance of absurdist humour and gentle nihilism. When interviewed, Leunig remarked that he felt happiness was always sad in some way, and vice versa. Not that he was proposing a maudlin schema, just that the two states of being were bound together.

In the words of Dorothy L. Sayers, Dante's Divine Comedy is a rich allegory of 'Man according to his merits and demerits in the exercise of free will'. She points up not only the theological aspects of the work, but also the 'existential' implications. For Sayers, the 'experience' of the poem was as important as its doctrinal statements.

...not merely the doctrine of hell, purgatory, and heaven, but the experience of those states, expressed in the movements of the images - those creatures of true flesh and blood that, like the matter of the sacrament, are that which they symbolise. 19

Sayers concludes these remarks showing something of her other skills, as a mystery writer. She remarks, albeit quite seriously, 'the whole experience might happen to any of us at any time, and nobody can feel safe'. 20

The central person of The Daybooks, Eddy Avenue, was unaware of the moment of his departures. They were not clear-cut, or precise in their meaning. They were full of oblique references and unexplained images. The Daybooks attempted to reflect that flowing, sometimes erratic quality of dream and remembrance.

In H.M. Saint's, Memoirs of An Invisible Man, a securities analyst is made invisible in a freak nuclear power plant accident. He moves through New York, pursued by the CIA, unseen and unknown. Not only literally invisible, his condition has been withheld from the public by a malevolent and determined CIA

1. Overview to the journals.
agent. He is truly alone within his own city. The book provides a wry observation on the nature of contemporary urban life.

To clear my mind I ran along the promenade and it occurred to me how extraordinarily confident I had become about moving around other people. It would be a melancholy experience but I began to feel a certain pleasure at the thought of living life amongst other people. 21

This unseen observer wanders through private parties, overhears deeply personal conversations, is an unknown third party to secret assignations and spends hours fascinated, watching people who think they are alone.

For Eddy, the experience of astral travel was often similar. However he never knew how long he would be away, his perception bearing no relationship to real time. There were moments of blissful escape, as well as periods of urgency and entrapment. At times the experience was detached, more observational than emotional. It was then that he became aware of the detail of the world around him. Sometimes he returned with only a faint aroma in his clothes, often of sea water, or the delicate aftertaste of vanilla in his mouth.

The recording of details, the very particular attention to the close view of the world, was an important part of his consciousness. In a broader sense, diaries are often significant for their ability to take note of the small events and objects that the large sweep of history ignores. We look to diaries and journals to uncover the real detail of past lives.

The chief value of autobiographies and diaries is, therefore, that they are direct records of the person involved in the situation from which he or she writes at first hand. There is no intermediary reporter or observer to change the situation. 22

The text of The Daybooks was also concerned to closely observe the world. This process is a metaphor for the Eddy's examination of his own feelings. Diarists often examine and re-examine their feeling about the world they live, the same themes relentlessly recur.

1. Overview to the journals.
Robbe-Grillet's minutely detailed novel, *Jealousy*, presents the reader with an obsessively observed narrative of interlaced relationships. The details of the narrator are microscopic, details of a hand railing, where the paint has peeled, the quality of light in a room at a particular time of day, the way his wife brushes her hair, or even breathes.

...guided now by the breathing alone, which is, in the complete darkness enough to create a regular rhythm capable of measuring something, if something remains to measure, to limit, to describe in the total darkness until the day breaks, now. 23

The book is overwhelming in its detail, presented again and again from a whole range of viewpoints.

The DCA's oscillation between the written word and the photograph was an attempt to provide a rich, layered work. The diary form was the linking structure that held together the diverse nature of the subject matter.

In Camus' book, *The Outsider*, Mersault, for the first time in his life, is held within the small austere environment of a prison cell. The loss of freedom for him becomes a loss of identity. In remembering the infinite details of his bedroom he regains something, although it is ill defined and certainly not a substitute.

I could spend hours merely listing the objects in my bedroom. I found that the more I thought, the more details half forgotten or malobserved, that floated up from my memory. There seemed no end to it. So I learned that after even a day's experience of the world a man could live a hundred years in prison. He'd have laid up enough memories never to be bored. 24

The exhibition, a flight without wings, 25 was a testing ground for these ideas. The central theme was the notion of Jamais Vu, (the opposite of that popular expression, Deja Vu), the approximate English translation being 'never seen'. This expression refers to the sense of the familiar becoming unfamiliar, as though it was never seen before.

1. Overview to the journals.
For Eddy Avenue this was a common experience. The world he knew was redefined by his astral travels, his voyages away from the predictable world of his everyday existence.

I felt at times a sense of being somewhere familiar—yet it was never familiar. Somehow the feelings and the actuality were misaligned. At other times I knew I should feel relaxed or welcomed, but did not. Instead I felt alien to my surroundings.

Like a kiss from a stranger. There were qualities of confusion, seduction and revulsion. All the form of intimacy, but not the substance.  

At this point I became interested in the problem of producing the text. So the next major period of production was concerned with the writing of the short stories. These were intended to form the basis of the text inserts. The collection of writing comprises nine short stories, titled *Swimming with Sharks*.  

The text pages of the *journals of a stranger* were based on this collection of stories, pieces written for *The Daybooks* and fresh material written to complete the submission.

The flow and continuity of the ideas within the *journals* varies from image to text. The individual volumes show some consistency in images used. In other words, they form clusters or sets of related images. This is intended to engender a sense of dwelling on an image, mimicking the ways in which our mind can revisit and relentlessly observe certain images. Our minds fix on a certain place for example, or the look of a person's skin, the placement of scars and so on.

The words however, are fragmented. I wanted to break up the narrative aspects, although they will form up again, in oblique ways, over the body of work. Within each part I wanted to achieve the sense of a restless, scattered consciousness. The names continually recur.
There is an inherent tension and interplay between the words and images, with no direct references being made between them. The work could be described as a discontinuous, dual narrative. The tone is not deliberately confrontational or exclusionary. The reader may look for, and perhaps enjoy, whatever 'resting places' appear to them from the body of the work.

In designing the work the major problem to resolve was that of the scale and size, the form of the project. I had first considered prints up to 40cm/50cm, presented as a boxed edition of unbound pages. Finally the small size of 21cm/20cm was chosen for two important reasons.

Firstly, this smaller size gives the work the 'look' of a journal. Few people write diaries 40cm/50cm. While I had never intended to fully create a 'reproduction' journal, I did want the work to embody in its form not only the essential nature of a journal but also the feel of 'evidence' collected.

Secondly, the size seemed to convey a sense of intimacy and delicacy to the work, small pictures on small pages. I had exhibited the work several times in the traditional manner and somehow that seemed to be another sort of exercise, saying something else. This form is absolutely crucial to work. It is interesting to observe that very few prints are exhibited at the sizes of the images in the journals, they are generally larger.

So, in conclusion, the two preceding works, Images of Manhood and the Daybooks of Eddy Avenue, were both concerned with themes and ideas that are built into journals of a stranger. In the following chapters I will develop these themes more fully.

1. Overview to the journals.
Notes.

1 John Szarkowski, *Photography Until Now*

2 This is a point that I discuss further in regard to the Diane Arbus,
   Chapter 4.

3 Richard Avedon, foreword, *In The American West 1979-1984*

4 Chapter 11.

5 Particia Holland, Jo Spence, Simon Watney, editors,
   *Photography/Politics: Two*
   London: Comedia Publishing Group, 1986 p. 3.

6 S. Wilkinson, ed. *Feminist Social Psychology: Developing Theory and
   Practice.*


8 This particular theoretical standpoint is not unusual, although the debate
   concerning the role of ‘nature or nurture’ is still very active. I have
   chosen fairly safe middle ground, not denying the influence of
   inheritance, but placing greater emphasis on the impact of environment.

9 At present Dr Margo Prior, at La Trobe University, is in engaged in a
   long term study of over fifteen hundred children, titled *The Australian
   Temperament Program.* The program is looking at gender difference,
   and the interplay of ‘nature / nurture’.

10 David Greenberg, *The Construction of Homosexuality*

1. Overview to the journals.
Of course, there is not one documentary style, Sander and Atget differ enormously. Other photographers who pioneered the documentary approach are Henri Cartier-Bresson, Lewis Hine and Erich Salomon. However, the notion of a documentary approach, one that strives to show the world as it is, according to the photographer, is discernible and useful.


This exhibition was shown at Disposals Gallery. It was presented as a formal component of the DCA Program. Chapter 8.


ibid, p. 187.

1. Overview to the journals.

22 John Burnett, ed., *Useful Toil Autobiographies of working people from the 1820's to the 1920's.*
Great Britain: Allan Lane, 1974 p. 10.

23 Alain Robbe-Grillet, *Jealousy*.

24 Albert Camus, *The Outsider*

25 Chapter 8.

26 *Daybooks Notes*, 31.

27 Chapter 9.

1. Overview to the journals.
Chapter 2. Contemporary Practice: Writing and Photography.

The artist is no longer assumed to be the originator of truth; there are no absolutes, and meaning is constantly shifting. ¹

It is not my intention to engage in a long discussion on the quality, or qualities of Post Modernism. That could rightly be regarded as an area far too large for a chapter, being a thesis in itself. The nature of Post Modernism is not clear, and the transition from Modernism, is not a neat, distinct switch. In fact, the whole area of Post Modernism is constantly under debate and in a process of definition. The term itself is wide ranging, and certainly has different understandings within different disciplines. Post Modern architecture refers to something quite removed from Post Modern fiction.

In 1981 Terry Smith put it all rather bluntly when, in refuting Clement Greenberg's ideas of Modernism, he asserted,

It is as crude as: Post-Impressionism followed Impressionism, and look what followed it! This is not only schoolboy art criticism, it is weak-kneed in the face of a market system scrambling to maintain itself. ²

In this chapter I would like to explore the context of my work, within current practice, both in writing and photography. There are cross-overs, commonalities of thought and approach that reveal the inter-connectedness of cultural production. However, there are also great divergences, both in practice, and in the terminology used to discuss that practice. It is too simple-minded to enter a generalised discussion of current practice that covers Post Modernist writing and photography.

2. Contemporary Practice: Writing and Photography.
The structures of each area are different, in short many more people read books than look at fine art photography. This is a point that is often overlooked in such discussions. The books of small independent publishers are relatively widely distributed. Melbourne and Sydney can claim only a few galleries dedicated to photography, and certainly no publishing house specialising in the field.

As well, it is important to note that these issues are dealt with throughout this text. I have made continued reference to photographic practice in particular, placing my work within the field of practice directly, and indirectly.

The fictional work that I started to write was very much in a realist tradition, I enjoy that approach, however, for the blend with the photographs, it has been necessary to break it down. The stories contained in Chapter 9. show the realist writing, undertaken over a period of approximately two years. Chapter 10. shows the first attempts at building a narrative that would accompany a photographic text, although in retrospect, this seems somewhat laboured. In assembling the finished work I have drawn on both sources, as well as adding whatever was needed along the way.

The writing in Chapters 9. and 10. represents the 'raw materials' for text of the journals. Not only in regard to the content, but also in the exploration of the ideas within those stories. They were never intended as maudlin, breast beating little pieces of 90's alienation, far from it. Rather, they address the minute details of people's lives, the expression of intimacy and its loss, and the idea of the essential aloneness of an individual's life.

Developing from those themes is the central thematic consideration of the journals. That is, the concept of a 'life'. The work investigates the way we analyse documents of a life to find clues to its structure. We look for intimate relationships, locations and perhaps crises (for no real life is always happy, according to the folklore). We seek to give a form in time and space. Biographers are engaged in this task. If we write an autobiography, we literally recreate, through editing and selection, our own lives. The diary is a serialised creation of a life, often incomplete and schematic.

The journals fall more clearly into the area of photographic practice, although the borders are coming down.
Where fiction and especially the short story, held sway only two or three years ago, writers are now experimenting with different genres, often blurring the distinction between fiction, autobiography, biography and history. 3

I am a photographer who added writing to fill out a photographic work. For that reason I have discussed contemporary writing in a more distanced manner. Whereas the second section, concerning photography, has sought to locate my work more specifically. This discussion cannot be comprehensive regarding structure and style. Given the space available, I have undertaken a selective outline of the fields, with particular reference to this DCA program.

Finally, such a strict categorisation is not always of worth, limiting the work both as writing, and as photography.
Contemporary Writing.

In discussing Australian novels Patricia Holt observed that the emergence of social realism was a reaction to the ethos of the 1890s. It represented a movement away from stories of the bush, to stories of the city, the urban heartland of Australia. In her book, *A City in the Mind: Sydney, Imagined by its Writers*, Holt commented that

...social realist writers prefer to describe the struggle of daily work and family life in cities of ordinary people, and some of their novels even end on notes of happiness.  

Antoni Jach, Melbourne based fiction writer, and publisher of *Modern Writing*, is in agreement. He notes that, even today, Australian writing is largely concerned with realism, a tradition of 'positivist humanism' that he traces back to Lawson.

The radical gesture of the 1890s is still the prevalent style in Australia today, in the 1990s overlaid with little aspects as well that come out of the 60s and 70s.  

Realism is the predominant tone of work that is published in Australia today. One could cite writers as divergent as Elizabeth Jolley, David Malouf, Gabrielle Lord, C.J. Koch, Jill Neville, Jean Bedford, Bryce Coutenay, Janet Turner Hospital, Judy Duffy, Bruce Pascoe, Tim Winton, and so on. Gary Disher's collection of short stories, *Personal Best 1/2*, are good examples of the realist tradition in Australian fiction. It should be noted that I am in no way suggesting these writers are all the same, they are definitely individual in intent, content and style, however they all present the 'real' world to the reader. They tell stories of what happened out there.

The role of publishers is of central interest within this discussion. Mainstream publishers are restrained by a range of factors, such as the small market that is spread out across the vast Australian continent, the low public profile of new writers/writing within the vision of supporting funding bodies, such as the Australia Council, and a contraction of the number of larger publishing houses. All of these considerations are exacerbated by a local economy in recession and
the complications of international copyright law, now in a process of reorganisation.

Some, such as Jach maintain that these, amongst other factors, have meant that the bigger publishing houses continue to publish fiction that fits into the realist tradition. For Jach, small press publishing allows the new author access to an audience, and freedom to write the work they feel is theirs, be it realist, or not. It is his contention that by local, cottage industry styled publishing, new traditions are established and the conservatising force of market driven publishing is side stepped.

It is interesting to see how small a niche market can be, as Antoni Jach remarked,

The idea of a local market is an interesting one. Here in Melbourne you could target Akland Street, St. Kilda, and Brunswick Street, Fitzroy, and you could probably get rid of two hundred and fifty copies of a high quality work...it's a small market, and you can actually reach people. 7

The situation is more complex than that outline would imply. In fact, when McPhee Gribble was taken over by Penguin, there emerged a greater possibility for an expansion of their list of important new work. This is the opinion of Sophie Cunningham, newly appointed director of the company. After the takeover the distribution problems were solved, as well, there was an obvious increase in access to working capital.

More importantly, Cunningham feels that Penguin was aiming to expand their range of publishing, rather than silencing an emerging source of competition. For Cunningham, successful publishing of new work is built on a base of established writers, working within saleable styles. The back list provides the publisher with a financial continuity and strength. Somewhat ‘tongue in cheek’ Cunningham remarked,

I want the list to be mixed...I want a cook book very quickly...it’s where the action is...that’s where the money is. 8
She went on to emphasise that the important, new work, that McPhee Gribble was known for, required the back list to support it. Cunningham sees her strategy for future publishing as actively defining her book list, drawing on new work, as well as ensuring a continuity of cash flow. In terms of the categories of realism or not, quality is the final arbiter.

I think a really wonderful Post Modern writer is a wonderful thing...an average post modern writer, well I'd much rather have a strong story that gives me voices from a region or places and makes me feel. 9

Now I am not setting up an oppositional framework, such as, big publishing (fraught with compromise) and small press publishing (flushed with ideological/aesthetic quality). Rather, there is an emerging situation where the two groups serve different sections of the writing community, albeit with lots of overlapping activity. To regard small press publishing as a form of the avant-garde is really to miss this point. The key notion is that of difference, diversity and the self-sufficiency of the micro market balanced against the growing sophistication of the larger publishers. Antoni Jach's press Modern Writing, never wants to be big. John Iremonger's Melbourne University Press, never wants to become a cottage industry. Sophie Cunningham's Mcphee Gribble, wants to continue the quality of its book list, within both established and innovative writing genres.

John Iremonger sees the process in this way.

The publisher ... has to be a sort of gatekeeper on a bridge. The bridge is from those once considered marginal readerships, those catering for them...the bridge that goes across into a market, a commercial market publishing at a certain scale and in a certain form. 10

The notion of a cultural core, the academy or the great tradition is falling away. This is reflected in comments made by Les Walkling in regard to photography and art as well. In areas of traditional academic or text book publishing titles are being sold beyond the campus. The major change being the designing of the cover to meet the requirements of a more stylish buyer.
Nowadays the whole situation is more fractured and that is particularly true in writing. 11

This loss of the great tradition's power is seen in other ways, such as the importance of genre writing, for example the detective novel. It is enjoying an enormous popularity at the present time (fig. 6). 12

I got up and peered through the gunsmoke, but I couldn't see anything. I'd dropped my gun. I bent over, feeling for it as much as looking. Suddenly, Tobbin was there --wide as a house with his breath coming in wheezy gasps and his chest heaving. He pointed a pistol at me and I froze. 13

In Australia Peter Corris was among the first of the new writers of detective books, with his Cliff Hardy series, reworking the Private Eye traditions into Sydney's humid, seedy world of crime. His first book was *The Dying Trade*, in 1980. More interestingly, the genre has been extended and enriched by the popularity of a whole new group of female detectives, the most acute example of reworking the genre being Claire McNab's lesbian detective.

In 1975 Dick Richards directed Robert Mitchem in *Farewell, My Lovely*. The baggy faced Mitchem giving his usual 'Private Eye in trouble, but staying cool' performance. Making an on-screen appearance was Jim Thompson, writer of the original novel. From 1942 he wrote twenty seven novels, including the screen plays of *Paths of Glory* and *The Killing*, for director Stanley Kubrick. His novels are of the dark side, and have enjoyed an enormous revival, achieving what is often described as 'cult status'. I mention them here for they are an example of the renewed interest in the 'genre' novel. Thompson's work has been repackaged and re-issued, or re-scripted for screen, to a receptive market. 14

English journalist, John Williams, crossed the US talking to crime writers. His book of the journey, *Into the Badlands*, 15 ties the writers to the immediate landscape of their lives. His purpose being to reveal the everyday nature of the writers, and therefore, their ability to speak of 'real' experience; realism is seen as credible, in a way that 'arty' is not. The remarks in his introduction give expression to the reasons for that renewed interest in the PI, (private detectives).
Even when American literary figures are concerned with the working population they tend to dwell on the past - Doctorow, Kennedy, Alice Walker, even - or to write about 'ordinary people' as if they were zoological specimens under a microscope - Raymond Carver, Richard Ford etc. Where the best crime writers are different is in their involvement: they are not simply writing about people; they have a necessarily closer relationship, born, if nothing else, out of the demands of writing for a mass audience, not a literary one. 16

This is an interesting concept, the literary market as opposed to the mass market. It seems an obvious distinction. Yet, in Jach's opinion, this distinction is significantly modified by culture,

The French, since the 1950s, have been obsessed with the idea of pushing literature forward. They are obsessed with the new, in terms of artistry, and in terms of culture. It's a fundamental keystone. Their society is fairly formal, and fairly rigid as well, but in their art, 'make it new' has been their catchcry. They see themselves as world leaders. 17

The French tradition is different, it presents an example where mass and literary audiences are not perceived as necessarily opposed, and where freshness and innovation are admired. Although this cult of the new is regarded by Iremonger as part an elitist tradition whereby the activity of the new work is restricted to a tight and secluded intellectual enclave.

Umberto Eco is an Italian writer, and a prolific commentator on Post Modernism. His work, The Name of the Rose, achieved enormous critical acclaim as a popular novel. In talking about the book he wrote

The very dichotomy between order and disorder, between a work for popular consumption and a work for provocation, though it remains valid, should perhaps be re-examined from another point of view. 18
Indeed, *The Name of the Rose* was made into a highly successful feature film, quite faithful to the text, starring Sean Connery. Eco optimistically, and somewhat playfully, states that

The ideal Post Modernist novel will somehow rise above the quarrel between realism and irrealism, formalism and "contentism", pure and committed literature, coterie fiction and junk fiction. 19

I would like however to emphasis the danger of an overly literal and hard edged categorisation of writing style and intent. Actually, there is a blended, blurred and changing community of active writers within Australia. To scan the smaller publications is not necessarily to find a wealth of non-realistic, non-mainstream work.

You just can’t assume that an independent [publisher] will be more exciting or adventurous. You often get more exciting and interesting people working for them. 20

Some journals, such as Bruce Pascoe’s *Australian Short Stories*, are quite grounded in the traditions of the battling, often failing, sometimes succeeding, Australian story of real life. The embodiment of Henry Lawson’s ‘radical gesture’, to use Antoni Jach’s term.

However, it still would be fair to say that the small press mostly looks to innovative work. Desktop publishing programs, and simple printing designs, are two technical factors that have helped the growing numbers of new writers to find a place to be published. A national festival of small press publishers will be held in Melbourne during September, 1992. Let me survey just a few.

*Island* magazine, from Tasmania, is a quality journal of new writing and literary issues. Prominent writers and commentators, such as Judith Wright, Robert Dessaix and Sara Dowse contribute as well as a selection of new writers. It is in the funded area of journals, being supported the Australia Council, the Tasmanian Government, Associated Pulp and Paper Mills and the University of Tasmania.

2. *Contemporary Practice: Writing and Photography.*
Vehicle however is in the tradition of producing a journal for ‘anyone who writes,’ 21 and is published with help of the suitably alternative bar, The Lounge. The work is varied and fresh, experimental short fiction and poetry.

Verandah takes its name from the well known symbols of the Australian way of life.

Verandah was established six years ago to give voice to new and innovative writers and artists. As editors we have concentrated on producing a volume which is diverse in both style and subject matter. 22

Nocturnal Submissions 'out Post Moderns’ the lot when the editors state their aims as follows,

For most of this century the Arts seem to have been dominated by the spirit of the avant-garde—the drive for newness. There are now signs that writers and other artists are beginning to return to working more closely within older traditions, free from the restrictions of having at all costs to 'make it new'. Nocturnal Submissions would like to support this emerging trend. 23

Noskumo publishes poetry and is notable for the lushness of its design. Clever use of paper stock and illustration have produced a quality ‘look’ to their publications not so evident in other small press publications. Cavafy's Room, for example, is printed on Verona cotton-rag paper, with Japanese hand made unryushi endpapers. As well, we are given details of typeface and edition numbers. The cost of the book in no way representing this quality of production. 24 A good example of the fact that small press publishing has little to do with financial gain.

Antoni Jach's series of publications, Modern Writing 1/2, are presented in large format, high quality editions of about three hundred. The writers are selected, and the style is deliberately removed from mainstream realist work. Jach characterises his own work as Modernist. The major distribution occurs at the night of readings organised to launch the new edition. Only minimal sales are then made through a few selected bookshops.
Jach sees the main impetus for his activities as freedom from external pressure. He is able to publish the writers he likes, regardless of outside influence. To this end he does not seek any institutional or governmental funding. It is an important break to acknowledge: funding rarely comes without some sort of pressure.

In all these journals the use of imagery is, at best, purely decorative. While some journals such as *Scarp*, seek to include graphics, photography and other visual material, the primacy of the writing remains.

It is important to mention here, as well, the present interest in the performance of work. Readings are well attended. Venues such as The Lounge, Lord Newry Hotel and Prince Patrick's Hotel in Melbourne, The Harold Park Hotel in Sydney, maintain a loyal audience for readings of new fiction.

In line with the recognition of women in other areas, a great interest in women writers has been evident in the catalogues of Australian publishers over the last twenty years. Albeit a recognition late in coming. Still, as Dale Spender notes

> So visible are the women novelists in the late 1980s that it has been seriously suggested within certain literary circles that some form of female conspiracy is being practised: the contention is that women have 'organised' and cornered the market, and that they are buying the books written by their own sex. 25

As well, following chiefly American trends, Gay literature has been a small, but growing presence. The 1991 Melbourne Writer's Festival invited, amongst other writers, American gay writer, David Leavitt. In journals such as *cargo*, there is evident the predominance of issues of political position and marginal representation, over the nuances of literary style. *cargo* is a journal of an under-represented social grouping.

Black Wattle Press is a Sydney-based small collective of gay men and lesbians. *cargo* is normally published in separate editions of women's and men's work, but you may have noticed that this is our first combined issue. The collective aims, through *cargo* and other publishing projects, to foster the work of gay male and lesbian writers. We operate on a non-profit basis. As a collective we are opposed to all forms of oppression

2. Contemporary Practice: Writing and Photography.
whether on the grounds of sexuality, gender, class, disability or race.

Despite this being a time of AIDS-related social reaction, in which Gays have been under fire again, the arena of writing still seems open to homosexuals, although it is hard to make a judgement on what this means exactly. It is a commonly expressed feeling of gay writers that they are writers who are gay; not gays who write. George Stambolian noted, in his introduction to *Men on Men: Best New Gay Fiction*.

Contemporary gay fiction like contemporary gay culture in general is the result of a massive lifting of self-censorship, and for most writers regression is unthinkable.  

As well, other ‘marginal’ groups, such as ethnic and Aboriginal writers, are being published more freely, at all levels.

Concurrently with this period of diversity of style, and the fracturing of ‘the great tradition’, we also see a more concerted effort to republish older work. This writing may have had limited circulation, published overseas or simply never published. Dale Spender is at the forefront of this activity.

Following on from her survey of twenty eight writers in her last book, *A City in the Mind: Sydney, Imagined by its Writers*, Patricia Holt sees her next project as searching out unpublished manuscripts, especially when this lack of attention was due to the pressures of fashion and/or prejudice, either at the time of writing, or today. Holt’s approach is characterised by a cynical distance from such pressures.

I particularly like Norman Lindsay but everyone ignores him these days because they reckon he was a sexist and a fascist, but I don’t think he was...he was very good on wowserism and double standards...and he makes you laugh. Also he’s excellent on families and relationships, growing up.  

In discussing the state of publishing in Australia Jill Kitson sees the last few years of global economic turmoil and restructuring, with its implications for

2. Contemporary Practice: Writing and Photography.
publishing agreements between Great Britain and The US, as having profound effects on Australian publishing and writing.

The small independent publishers who not only survive but flourish are those who have found a niche in the market, often for specialist titles.

Finally, given the nature of my work, it is fair to say that it is aligned to the areas of fine art photography more easily than published fiction. My work is clearly informed by the way in which fiction is written and published, however, it is more comfortably located elsewhere. While some borders might be coming down, there are still quite a few in good condition.
Contemporary photography.

It is not simply a matter of looking. One must strive ever deeper into the atoms of our truths, regardless of where it leads. And eventually the photographer must close his eyes to see that truth. 30

As with writing, contemporary photographic practice is characterised by a loss of the 'dominant style'. The most obvious observation to make concerning contemporary photography is its diversity. The Bi-Centennial exhibition, Australian photography: The 1980's 31 showed a range of work from quite traditional, fine print approaches, to intellectually complex, theoretical works. In Les Walkling's words, 'its up for grabs'. 32

In 1990 the Art Gallery of South Australia held a group exhibition of photographers titled Fragmentation and Fabrication: Recent Australian Photography. In the catalogue Julie Robinson wrote

Within Post Modern photography, two of the dominant visual characteristics and practices to have appeared are fragmentation and fabrication. While seemingly contradictory, these approaches are, in fact, complementary. 33

This mixing and matching of style, and discipline, is evident in the Hallmark show, Twenty Contemporary Photographers. 34 As Isobel Crombie, curator of photography at the National Gallery of Victoria, remarked in an interview made in February, 1992 (Fig. 7).

I think you just have to give up on those strict categories that have existed in photography for so long. One of the things that is happening in a lot of contemporary photography is the breaking down of those boundaries - whether it be photography and digital imagery, or whether it be photography and sculpture, or print making, or whatever. 35
The journals place text with image. As well, there is a narrative, not specific, deliberately broken up and impressionistic. There is a qualitative difference between presenting photos alone, as opposed to photos accompanied by a narrative text. The use of narrative is, in fact, not new, although, in the twentieth century, it usually is found from the seventies on. It is aligned with the generally accepted shifts in art practice that have been evident in the decline in Modernist thinking and practice.

Getting the photos is merely one step in a larger process of artmaking. Meaning is not simply found, but invented and intended. 36

Here is a central notion of Post Modernist photography; the negotiation of meaning between viewer and artist. Some suggest that meaning is not embedded within a work, and therefore, not available to the person willing to peel back the layers. Australian photographer Les Walkling maintained this position; 'the artist is innocent'. More theoretically, as Yve Lomax remarked,

The 'post-modern condition' has been said to be a complete ditching of the real referent, a loss of reality where images only refer to other images. 37

The question of authorship is raised by this statement. Indeed, as Sturrock observed,

The Author is in fact a construct, or hypothesis, formed by a reader on the evidence of his or her reading. Whatever is known about an Author is textual, that is; they have no other existence for us. 38

It is interesting to consider the comments of French theorist and deconstructionist, Jacques Derrida, on this point when he states that

...I would not say that there are no authors, but whoever bears the name 'author', to whom the legitimate status of author is accorded, is someone who is himself determined by the text, and is situated in the text or by the text. He's not in the situation of the creator god before his text. 39

2. Contemporary Practice: Writing and Photography.
More particularly, in relation to photography, the break between Modernism and Post Modernism is characterised by Steven Connor in the following manner. Modernism is a 'restricted field, with its stress on individuality, purity and essence' and Post Modernism can be seen as an 'expanded field, with its embrace of the contingent conditions which attend upon photography as a social practice'.

Now there is an important implication here that some people find problematic, that is, in all these conceptualisation's of Post Modernism there is a dulling of the political edge, in the traditional sense. As Linda Andre remarked,

The claims made by Post Modernism for political empowerment are particularly ironic when we consider how it locates the individual in a situation of powerlessness. He or she has lost control of perhaps the most important power left in this society of the spectacle, the power to make images.

Or as Dan Latimar wryly noted, when discussing architecture,

As a modernist, one had wanted to know where one was, as an isolated monad, in relation to one's surroundings. In Postmodernism one must no longer know where one is. One must be stripped of coordinates.

Latimar builds a larger argument around this sort of notion, asserting that although there is an apolitical strand running through Post Modernist commentary and practice, 'We are within it. We are part of it whether we like it or not'.

To return to Andre, for she more succinctly puts the problem, in talking specifically of photography she notes that

Post Modernism and documentary represent the two extreme and opposed practices: one, happily naive about its status as picture, as representation, claims to transparently reflect reality; the other proclaims that its status as picture is all that it can reflect.

Helen Ennis wrote chidingly in 1986, when describing the early 80s in Australia,
A major change, however, that must be addressed is the relative lack of art work referring to specific political issues. The move to the studio, evident in much recent photography, can also be seen as a retreat to the individual’s fantasy world and a reassertion of the values of individualism.  

With hindsight the arenas of political comment and challenge were changing, shifting in some measure, although not negating the more direct stances of the previous decades. The politics of sexuality, state power and individual freedom were moving to areas such as the nature of gender representation, the reality of a multi-cultural Australia and questions of land usage and ownership. I, like untold others around the world, have a chip of the Berlin wall on my window sill. Whether its real or not is quite inconsequential in comparison to its symbolic significance. And, tragically, the AIDS epidemic has severely downgraded the optimistic social changes of the early 70s.

The end of the War in Vietnam altered the political agenda for Australians. Notably, many years later, Vietnam veterans were paraded through the streets of Sydney to a belated, but emotional welcome, not because of their valour so much as their pain. Compensation and litigation over the Agent Orange side-effects, of course, remain largely unresolved. Radical rock group, Red Gum even released a single, *I was only nineteen*, that forged an unusual political alliance between the band and the people the song was about. The times had indeed changed; in the 60s protest songs never made friends with the enemy.

That art, by its nature, is political, is question often answered in the affirmative, although the nature of the answers given usually vary tremendously. And certainly, the question has been answered very differently over the last twenty years. In 1986, English artists, Gilbert and George expressed the continuing tradition of forthright, uncompromising art practice when they remarked,

> There are a lot of people who firmly believe that art is in the museum or in the gallery or in the house for one purpose only and that is, they expect the work of art to pat them on the back and say, you understand art and you glide past the work in your very nice coat which is very good taste and go off to your very nice

2. Contemporary Practice: Writing and Photography.
They expect the art to support their way of life as educated people. And we don't believe that.

To return to the notion of documentary as opposed to Post Modern I would note that my work moved from a documentary project, Images of Manhood, to a quite different form, the journals, which is a fabricated, fictitious diary. An amalgam of text fragments and images by no identified person. Speaking as the artist, the work holds more than the documentary project could ever hope to.

My work does not proclaim absolute truth. My concern is with the creation of a discontinuous narrative. The theoretical components of gender are present by suggestion and implication. They are implicit within the frame and shown by the nuance present in the text. I have avoided a strong or didactic statement, not because that is wrong, it is simply inappropriate to the work.

It would seem that Post Modernism has, by its eclectic diversity, allowed works to operate at a whole range of political and emotional levels. For the journals the combination of written text with images is crucial, redefining the character of both. American photographer, Duane Michals (Fig. 8), has said that photographs are excellent for detail, but of no use for understanding meaning or intention,

A photograph of a person whom we find attractive does not reveal the complex nature of desire that it provokes in us.

My work investigates this disjuncture between representation of intimate experience and the 'complex nature of desire that it provokes in us'. Written components within the work create a second narrative, an interplay with the photographs. The boxed form creates an expectation of evidence to be examined, documents of a life.

Here, then, is a selection of photographs that question their own definitions: they might be Australian, but in order to be so they look away from their immediate locale so as to find their derivations and significances; they might be photographs, but in order for them to have a "singing" artistry or allure, they incorporate techniques from other aesthetic spheres. Here are photographs that look to lead their viewers aside.
So wrote Ross Gibson in 1986 introducing the exhibition of photographs, *Elsewhere*. His comments draw to attention the process that is still very much in motion, that is, the cross over between photography and other practices. In fact Les Walkling noted that some impressive photographic work of the last few years has been made by people who have passed through photography. People who may have trained as painters for example, worked in photography, and now have moved on. Of these people one could cite Mickey Allen and Jacky Redgate (Fig. 9 and 10).

Of the most striking features of contemporary photography is the notion of appropriation. Consider these remarks by Susan Fereday.

> I'm interested in re-photography and other conceptual strategies, but I have concluded from my research that strategy such as re-photography will only be useful in a certain time, and in a certain conservation. 50

The notion of appropriating, and commenting on exiting imagery, while it has precedents with the work of people such as John Heartfield (Fig. 11), is generally regarded as a key feature of some contemporary work. 51 This appropriation takes many forms from reconstruction, as in Anne Zahalka's work, to re-photography of existing images, such as Sherrie Levine's copying of famous photographs (Fig. 12), to the printing and exhibiting of found negatives, as in the case of Jacki Redgate's work (Fig. 13). 52

Of these examples Redgate is the most pertinent to my work. Her images are snapshots, from an unknown photographer, yet she has enlarged them, lovingly giving them all the attention of a fine print. This process draws out another quality in them.

This is a visual record, a diary of sorts, of a cohesive group of strangers. As with most photographs on the wall of a Gallery, we do not know the people in them. Rather, we know the experience of memory through pictures like these, past members of our family who we never met are shown to us in this form, and that is the powerful aspect of this work. They have the hazy quality of the old snapshot, of people in dated clothes and of the technical limitations of the image.
It is a compelling work, drawing you back to the awkward, openness of the sitters.

I found the series powerful for another reason. I was given an old folding camera by my brother, one he bought at a country 'opportunity' shop. I was surprised to find a roll of film still in it. When I processed it I found only one printable negative. It showed a woman, dressed to go out and standing in the full sun. Behind her was that most typical of Australian suburban icons, a paling fence. From time to time the photograph surfaces in my drawer and I am always fascinated by it never knowing quite what to make of it. I have become extremely fond of the photograph, and of the person it shows (Fig. 14).

That suggestion of remembrance and half knowing is also embodied in the journals of a stranger. It is that sense of almost drawing meaning off the image, of almost completing the riddle. Unlike Redgate I have shot all the images, for that gives my work another sort of resonance. And, unlike Redgate, I have deliberately chosen to avoid the gallery presentation of mounted enlargements. I wanted to create a close intimacy with the boxed form, the album-like feel of little images, stuck in to save moments and observations of experience. As is stated in the title, my work is in the form of 'documents of a life'.

However, this discussion would be misleading if it did not acknowledge that many formal and traditional fine print practices still continue. Photographers such as Steven Lojewski (Fig. 15) and Grant Mudford (Fig. 16) continue to explore considerations of design, documentation and print surface. Their work is 'stylish' and to some degree cool.

Stephen has been very smart these last twenty years, developing this cool persona, this beautiful, direct quality of print, with no alteration in the darkroom. 53

Within the US the f 64 School of fine print follows in a direct line from the originators, Adams, Weston, White and Cunningham (Fig. 17-20). Today Fred Picker not only runs the aptly named Zone VI Workshop, he markets a large range of mail order, fine print products (Fig. 21).
The journals sought to create a more personal documentation, the text fragments locating the photographs within an intimate arena of 'a life'. For Les Walkling the notion of intimacy held some considerable resonance, as his work often asks the viewer to consider the moment of viewing the photograph. The work technically is very finely executed, he is amongst the most skilled of the photographic print makers in Australia (Fig. 22). For Walkling it is a process of communication, 'I think art is a gift, it's about caring about people'.

While his work is lush and seductive in its surface quality there remains a certain lack of irony that tends to monumentalise the images. The text inclusions being somewhat over grand in their implications. Still, his willingness to engage the notion of intimacy is of interest, for the journals sought to deal with this area, not directly, but implicitly.

The most compelling of the contemporary photographers, integrating text and image is the American, Duane Michals (Fig. 8). His work stands as the most influential in regard to the journals.

Working very simply, using basic techniques of lighting, printing and sequencing, Michals adds to his photos hand written notes. The works break with the rigidity of the formal photograph operating on the more subliminal aspects of photographic representation. The thematic considerations are cinematically expressed, investigating the nature of communication.

I am a short story writer. Most other photographers are reporters. I believe in the imagination. What I cannot see is infinitely more important than what I can see...All good artists invent their own worlds. 54
Notes.

1 Helen Ennis

2 Terry Smith, 'Modernism and Realism: Some Orientations', *Art and Text* 2, 1981 p. 34.


6 For over twenty years Sasha Soldatov applied for grants and funding from the Australia Council. Towards the late eighties he had become a moderately successful writer, published by Penguin. So he launched an action against the Australia Council over their policy for grants to new writers. Arts funding is usually not a litigious area. Although the action produced a flurry of activity, it was finally dropped. Presumably, the political purpose had been served in the initiation of the proceedings, not in a protracted and difficult court case. The Australia Council became much more sensitive to the notion of accountability following this legal activity.

7 Jach, op. cit.


9 ibid.

10 John Iremonger, publisher, Melbourne University Press, formerly Melbourne.
11 ibid.

12 Stuart Coupe, 'Walking The Detectives: Five Australian crime fiction writers go undercover with their creations on the streets of Melbourne and Sydney, where danger--and literally raw material--lurks.' The Age Magazine, April 4, 1992, pp. 8-17.


A particularly bleak example of Thompson's work is The Killer Inside Me. A chilling novel, written in the first person, that reveals the mind of a psychopathic killer. Lou Ford, the narrator, is deputy sheriff in a small town.

'Dad wanted me to be a doctor, but he was afraid to have me go away to school so he'd done what he could for me at home. It used to irritate him, knowing what I had in my head, to hear me talking and acting like any other rube in town. But, in time, when he realized how bad I had the sickness, he even encouraged me to do it'. Jim Thompson. The Killer Inside Me. First published in 1952.

More recently Dennis Hopper and Jack Nicholson have moved into directing similar material.

15 John Williams, Into the Badlands.

16 ibid, p. 8.

17 Jach, op. cit.

2. Contemporary Practice: Writing and Photography.
18 Umberto Eco, Reflections on The Name of the Rose

19 ibid, p. 71.

20 Cunningham, op. cit.


24 Adrian D' Ambra, Cavafy's Room.

25 Dale Spender, Writing a New World: Two Centuries of Australian
Women Writers.


28 Holt, op. cit.

29 Jill Kitson, op. cit. p. 71.

30 Duane Michals, Twelvetrees Press Catalogue.

31 Helen Ennis, Australian Photography: The 1980s.

2. Contemporary Practice: Writing and Photography.


One could also cite the work of American artists Sherrie Levine, Barbara Kruger, Sarah Charlesworth, Robert Heinecken and in Australia Jacki Redgate and Susan Fereday.

Anne Zahalka produced a series of work specifically referring to Dutch Painters titled Resemblance, 1987. Sherrie Levine has for some years re-photographed work by photographers of the standing of Weston, Evans and Porter. Her images carry titles such as After Walker Evans 1981. Jacki Redgate exhibited a series titled photographer unknown, A Portrait Chronicle of Photographs, England 1953-62. It was made up of fifteen images from a found collection of snapshot negatives. The work is dated 1984, however it was recently shown at ACCA, Melbourne, 1992, as part of a two person show, Redgate/Stacey.
53 Les Walkling, op. cit..

54 Anne H. Hoy *Fabrications: Staged, Altered, and Appropriated Photographs*.

2. Contemporary Practice: Writing and Photography.

On this day we had gone to all the usual spots, checking for any new bits of junk. We also spent an hour lying naked in the sun, hidden within the bush, out of sight of the world. Here we were able to enjoy the hot sun and the unrestricted pleasure of examining each other's bodies, in great detail. 1 [from the journals of a stranger.]

My purpose is to look at the only place in Australia that I know well, the only place I know from the inside, from my body out-wards, and to offer my understanding of it as an example of how we might begin to speak accurately of where and what we are. What I will be after is not facts, or not only facts, but a description of how the elements of a place and how our inner lives cross and illuminate one another, how we interpret space, and in so doing make our first maps of reality, how we mythologise spaces and through that mythology (a good deal of it inherited) find our way into a culture. 2

David Malouf's words are particularly engaging, an elegant description of the process of examining the every-day-ness of our lives. In Malouf's words, we are 'mapping our reality', by looking closely at the things of our beginnings, we find the understanding of where we are, and what we are, enriched.

The sites of such investigations are journals, diaries and autobiographies. To an extent, biographies work within the same territory. It would seem that the most important distinction to be made here is that all these forms are supposed to be about the truth. The real, lived experience of the subject.

Yet, as Malouf carefully defined the process, it is 'our reality', in the end, that is being presented. The division between fiction and nonfiction, autobiography and novel for example, is a 'false dichotomy'. 3 The novelist tells a different truth to the autobiographer or the diarist. We are hopeful, to put it mildly, in
thinking that the journal is the place where no falsehood exists. More particularly, in the light of contemporary writers such as Barthes, as readers, we establish the truth or otherwise of the work.

I can create the autobiography as true or false. It requires my presence in order to reflect reality. 4

As Geoffery Dutton observed, while discussing his work on poet Kenneth Slessor,

It is not only the past that has to be dug up, the fragments assembled, and then decoded to reveal the subject of the biography, but the biographer has also to be decoded by the reader. 5

Writers are often concerned to explore their everyday existence within these forms of the journal and autobiography. Often it is the mundane that is revolutionary in nature.

Real dreams are from home . back there. The light as it was, will be, might have been . all the receding dream tenses. 6

Les Murray alerts us more clearly to the process that David Malouf is engaged in. Rather than just looking backwards, he is talking within the 'dream tense', in which time coalesces into an amalgam of things past and present, a map of his reality, at the moment of his writing, that book or that essay. This is the process that diarists are engaged in.

They may be famous people, writing their journal of great events, always conscious of their role in history. The trappings of greatness being publication of a person's diary, journals, notes, letters, autobiography, and finally, the definitive biography, in which the biographer jostles with the subject for equal status. T.E. Lawrence was frank and to the point when he explained the reason for writing the book of his experience in Arabia, Seven Pillars of Wisdom.

It does not pretend to be impartial. I was fighting for my hand, upon my own midden. 7

As well, there may be less prominent citizens, charting only the course of their everyday life. The story of an ‘ordinary’ life initially being told only for the benefit of the diarist. These can be documents that record quiet inner journeys, solitary and intimate.

My diarist is not named, or given a gender, but is presented throughout the work as a consciousness, or presence. The observation is sometimes cool, like the detached tracking of a cine camera. Sometimes the perception is more intense, more partial.

I am fascinated by the concept of astral travel, in which we supposedly leave our bodies. This idea of just floating away from the physical body yet to be able to still observe, and be present, in the real world. This concept is embodied within the form of the work, although not directly referred to as an out of body experience.

Astral travel, out of body experiences and so forth are often presented in mystical terms, typically as a near death experience. Sometimes explained by the rationalist as the effects of a lack of oxygen to the brain, an explanation refuted by others as a meaningless, reductionist approach, telling us nothing of the nature of the experience.

Written shortly before his death William Allingham's entry in his diary, for March 1889, is quite poignant in its openness,

I had a very curious dream whose floating imagery evades the cast of the net of language. I thought I found myself somehow by looking aside, aware of some of the main secrets of Nature's material workshop. I saw below the superficial surface of things. A pleasant satisfaction remained after I had awaked.

As I have discussed previously, astral travel is not specifically referred to in the final presentation. I mention it here to emphasis a quality of the journals of a stranger, perhaps of many diaries. As Dorian Gray remarked 'To become a spectator of one's own life is to escape the suffering of life'. But then again he had a darker intention.
Diaries in themselves are often a most intimate record of everyday experience. Let me steal from Les Murray. He spoke of dreams as the 'land where nothing is held trivial' and indeed, the same is true of the diary form. Of course a central issue in understanding the process of diary writing is to ask who is intended to see them?

In her article ‘Letter writing and Journal Scribbling’ Dorothy Jones astutely notes that

> Even the most private diary has at least one potential reader, the writer's future self.  

On Easter Sunday, April 20th 1919, one of the century's most important writers penned this note in her diary.

> I got out this diary and read, as one always does read one's own writing, with a kind of guilty intensity...  

On Friday, April 8th 1921 she put it all more plainly when she wrote

> I ought to be writing...and I can't, and instead I shall write down the reason why I can't - this diary being a kindly blank faced old confidante. Well, you see, I'm a failure as a writer. I'm out of fashion: old: shan't do any better.

The author of these self depreciating words was Virginia Woolf, one the most prominent Modernist writers.

Another important English diarist discussed the problem more prosaically. On Wednesday December 8th 1984 he made the following entry into his diary.

> 10:00pm I am terrified. In fact I have writer's block.  
> 11:30pm Unblocked. Finished poem.

The writer of this glib one liner was Adrian Mole, aged 13½.
So the diary is place for both the big revelation and the smallest observation of a life. In a way the written page seems to give them equal weight. And, as I have been suggesting, the minutiæ of life, the every-day-ness, the landscape of domesticity, is often the site of the big revelation.

The French writer, Michel Leiris, in his autobiographical work, *Manhood*, wrote with mannered humour that

I owe my first contact with the notion of infinity to a tin of Dutch cocoa, the raw material of my breakfasts. One side of the tin was decorated with an image of a farm girl in a lace cap, holding in her left hand an identical tin, decorated with the same image of the smiling, pink girl. I still get dizzy imagining that infinite series of an identical image endlessly reproducing the same Dutch girl...16

In Truman Capote's novel, *In Cold Blood*, Mrs Clutter, the sadly astray mother, describes some of the special things of her lounge room. This is a much more telling display. It poignantly speaks of the ways our inner lives become inscribed onto the mundane objects of our surroundings.

'There was a shop that sold such precious things. These cups'. A set of doll-house teacups, anchored to a diminutive tray, trembled in the palm of her hand.

'Daddy gave them to me; I had a lovely childhood'. 17

As to the content of diaries Dorothy Jones noted,

The diaries, letters and memoirs written by nineteenth century women in Australia not only provide details of past and domestic experience, but give fascinating glimpses of the writer's inner lives. 18

There is more than just information of historical interest. Whether intended for publication or not, the process of writing is often the arena to investigate 'the inner life'. As Stephen Spender remarks,

...the inner life is regarded by most as so dangerous that it cannot be revealed openly and directly. An antidote that can be applied at the very
moment of revelation needs to be applied to this material. The antidote was once the church. Today it is the vast machinery of psychological analysis and exploration. 19

This contemporary process of ‘psychological analysis and exploration’ being wryly satirised by Kinky Friedman in his novel When the Cat’s Away. Kinky, Texan Jewish Country singer, turned private detective, often discusses his ‘inner life’ with his nonchalant cat.

"I’m not afraid to die”, I said. “I’m not afraid to live. I’m not afraid to fail. I’m not afraid to succeed. I’m not afraid to fall in love. I’m not afraid to be alone. I’m just afraid I might have to stop talking about myself for five minutes”.

The cat yawned. 20

So my work is concerned to construct a fiction around images and words. 21 There are several points to make.

Firstly, of course this is a fiction. However I am not concerned to totally fabricate a diary. While that is a fine thing to do, for this project, it is not essential. I do not need to stage it all in such a fully realised reconstruction, with say an original looking artefact. (Pages stained with tea and rat eaten edges for example.)

Secondly, the strength of the work is in the interplay of text and image. The text is fragmented and fictional.

Thirdly, this work is concerned with the themes of identity presented within the material world and the ways in which we express intimacy. There is a certain romantic quality to the titles of the sections. As I have mentioned before, diaries are often about these central themes of intimacy and identity. If not expressly, then certainly implicitly within the structure of a diary, no matter what the specific form.

To be a diarist is not necessarily to be a great writer. John Julius Norwich described William Allingham's poem, 'The Fairies', as 'the most embarrassing
poem to ever have found its way into the *Oxford Book of English Verse*. Yet, as a diarist, Norwich regards him as ‘superb’, compelling and someone to read regularly.

Nor are the contents of a diary in themselves always interesting. In editing the travel diaries of the Wilson sisters, *A European Journal: Two Sisters abroad in 1847*, the editor, Jennifer Simpson, saw fit to ensure that ‘dull days with bad weather are left out’. We are presented with an edited journal, notable for its picture of the attitudes of people of the Wilson sister’s class and generation.

...a little wretch of a boy, a true Italian, (a thief to the backbone), while our backs were turned rushed into place, pocketed the bread we had left and stood looking as unconscious as a statue.

The Wilson's were recording a trip of some great pleasure, the cost reflecting their considerable mercantile wealth. Their diary is a diversion, a record, often at a distance, of the trials and joys of their trip. It is not, however, the record of deep issues.

... returned to our own home in the evening, where we were kindly welcomed after our long absence and were very glad to find ourselves safe at home & with so many pleasant remembrances of our journey to talk about during the winter that was approaching.

The writing of Georgiana McCrae, on the other hand presents a more searching and troubled journal of an English woman abroad. She travelled with her husband from England to Melbourne in the 1840s, to start a new life in the new world of the colony. She noted in her journal, on the 28th December 1841, after a rather long and tiresome tea with Captain Cole, Thomas Anne and Mr. John Mundy,

I gave birth to a fine girl. The doctor on his way home, tapped at the window of Mr McCrae's bedroom and told him what had happened while he had been asleep.

Dale Spender comments that McCrae ‘used her journal to structure and sustain her reality, to realise her reality, to realise her own identity - to stay sane’. 27
This ‘realisation’ of self, in the tangible form of a diary, may not always confirm one’s sanity.

But let’s go back to the reason for this diary. Wait a minute, why do I say let’s? could it be that I’m not alone perhaps? or is this diary an excuse to tell things to someone? who could it be? or am I talking to myself? am I splitting in two? which part is talking to which other part? 28

The intent of the diarist is not always apparent. What is intended for publication and what it is meant only as personal record is sometimes hard to discern.

Evelyn Waugh kept a diary from high school, yet certain key periods, time for him of great emotional stress, are marked by either no diary being kept, or by the journal actually being destroyed. The holidays in 1919 were a time that Waugh chose to remove from his diary as it referred to a time of homosexual activity. 29 Further more the Editor of his published diaries, Michael Davies, had to contend with issues of potential offence to people named that were still living. Not to mention the quite likely prospect of legal action.

Publication of the verbatim text will not be possible for some years, because of the English laws of libel. In this edition, twenty-three libellous references have been altogether excised. 30

10 June 1963
...The Profumo Case; newspapers and politicians are hysteric; ‘the greatest scandal of the century’. In my lifetime there have been two adulterous Prime Ministers, Lloyd George and ________, and almost a certainly a third, Balfour.31

Davies also reveals the fact that Waugh was a poor speller, although in later life he showed some improvement. As editor Davies chose to correct the spelling mistakes.

At the beginning of his own published holiday diary to Africa, A Tourist in Africa, Waugh remarks,
Writing now in high summer (for this is not the diary as I kept it. I am trying to make a book from the notes I took abroad), it seems hardly conceivable that I shall ever want to leave my agreeable house and family. 32

In his journal of a trip to the dark continent Waugh shows the acerbic wit and observation that fills his fictional work. The authorial voice of Black Mischief and many other of his novels, comes to the reader with a new authority, for it seems that it is the real Waugh speaking.

The weather grows pleasantly warm; not warm enough to justify the outbreak of shorts which both sexes, from now on, inelegantly assume. 33

Waugh is as ironic and patronising as one would have expected, 'For an Englishman the English make ideal travelling companions'. 34 And so he goes on to snipe at his English companions throughout the length of the Suez.

All day in the Canal drifting past the dullest landscape in the world, while passengers hang fascinated on the taff rails and take spools of snapshots. 35

Of this question of truth and reality in journal and autobiographical writing it is interesting, although it shows us no more or less truth to the situation, to read Auberon Waugh's comments on his father. Consider the 'agreeable house and family' that Evelyn wrote it was 'hardly conceivable that I shall ever want to leave.' Auberon wrote of his father's attitude to his children in this quite critical manner,

The most terrifying aspect of Evelyn Waugh as a parent was not just that he reserved the right to deny the affection to his children but to advertise an acute and unqualified dislike of them. Even at this time, I half-suspected that he was aware of the relief we felt when he was away... 36
As I discussed earlier, responsibly for truth and fiction is shared by reader and writer, negotiated in the process of diary writing and reading. In this case, a simple point to make is that Evelyn writes as father and Auberon as his son.

We have become accustomed by now to the idea that autobiography, no matter how "honest", involves necessary fictions, artifices of self-exposure, masks through which alone the self can be known. The notion of the life cycle, in its developed forms, also involves necessary fictions...On a particular day we suddenly realise that we are, or considered by others, old, or middle aged, or even adolescent, but no sounding trumpets mark the transition from one category to the next. 37

Dale Spender plays with this notion of the authority of the diarist's personal view in her deliberately provocative book, The Diary of Elizabeth Pepys. Spender is concerned to explore the real life conditions of the women of the 17th and 18th centuries. This fabricated diary provided a base to locate the historical research that she had undertaken. Not to mention contesting one of the masculinist canons of history.

Basically, the only difference between me and a conventional biographer is that whilst they would write about the past in the past tense, I am writing about the past in the present tense. 38

In the discussion of landscape I make the point that we impose on a landscape a view, seen from a cultural vantage point. We create a landscape, sometimes in stark contrast to the realities of the topography and climate. The much quoted example being the Europeanisation of Australia in some representations. One could also note that we need to interpret non-living structures within the metaphor of a 'life'. The model of human existence being a strong locating notion for understanding objects which are neither animate, nor confined by the exigencies of human experience. I draw the distinction here between some cultural and religious expressions that would see these 'inanimate' objects as in fact quite animate and living, such as certain Aboriginal beliefs, and the Western/Christian tradition that speaks in terms of metaphor.

For example, in Spearritt's ironically titled Sydney Harbour Bridge: A Life and Michael Pye's ebullient Maximum City: The Biography of a New York, we find an
anthropomorphic view of the great bridge and the great city. These inanimate entities of engineering and architecture assume the qualities of people.

Spearritt elegantly describes the way the Bridge became the embodiment of modernism and technological hope. As a sub text to his writing, he reveals the humanisation of the structure, usually couched in masculinist terminology. Hence his subtitle, 'A life', a standard appellation for a biographical work. 39

Pye's New York is paradoxical in character, showing an array of human qualities. 'The city is violent, sexual, corrupted, extravagant, ambitious, pretentious'. 40 His book is rich and fulsome, fleshing out a complex character of good and evil. Pye contests the simple reading of New York as bankrupt and cruel, adding that it is also a place of love and hope. In short, he has given Manhattan the depth of human nature, a layered consciousness of which a glib judgement is inappropriate.

In both those examples the time spans covered were tailored to meet the requirements of the city and the bridge. Indeed, diaries and biographies are often structured by the strict passage of time, the date marking each entry, each interval of the life noted. This exact timing of the events in the life of diarist often allows the reader to feel they can interpret the life more fully, placing it within the context of larger, surrounding events.

This notion of time, as central to the exposition of a life, is important in its two most obvious forms. Both as a marker of time passed, things undertaken, experienced and so forth. And as a constraint to be released from. To describe a life's work or experience as 'timeless' is to place it on a higher plane.

More interestingly, the relentless marking of time, as some diarist feel they must, gives equal weight to momentous days as well as quiet days and creates a different pace to a piece of narrative. The plot often absolutely defines the presentation of time sequences. Quiet days may be passed over by a biographer, who may see their task as documenting the significant stages, removing the mundane. Not to mention the common use of flashbacks. As I mentioned earlier, to keep the narrative moving along the editor of the Wilson Sisters' Journal saw fit to cut back on the dull days for publication.
In another sense we are led to see the importance of each moment, valuing it for its existence, rather than its perceived significance. This reordering of time can give a meditative quality to diaries, often absent from biography. In some fiction, such as Robe-Grillet, the plot is secondary to the structure of time passing. Certainly Warhol explored this in films like *Blow Job*. Ironically such a sexually explicit title and concept (although we watch only the face of man engaging in sex, all the ‘dirty bits’ are off-screen) becomes, on film, more concerned with the nature of time.

In some cases the celebrity status of the diarist invests in the ordinary a sense of significance. Almost like the fan magazines reporting of a ‘day in the life’, everything they do is seen as interesting, regardless of its banality. In Choukri’s short diary of meetings with Jean Genet the importance of the entries is to do with the star status of Genet. In this case, the real interest is in knowing what Genet has for breakfast, how he likes his coffee and any of a number of such facts. We are interested because it is Jean Genet, William Burroughs winds up the hype in the introduction.

As I read Choukri’s notes, I saw and heard Jean Genet as clearly as if I had been watching a film of him. To achieve such precision simply by reporting what happened and what was said, one must have a rare clarity of vision. Choukri is a writer. 41

Post Modernism is, in part, characterised by the breaking down of time restrictions, as it relates to stylistic considerations. Umberto Eco can write within the detective genre for his Medieval thriller, *The Name of The Rose*. Contemporary painters such as Simon Blau can, in the 1990s, paint in styles that have similar qualities to earlier works by Badham and Preston, from the 1930s. 42 It was a feature of Modernism to regard older styles as ‘out of date’ and to regard the new as a unified body of activity. Similarly, concepts such as an avant-garde have broken down, for they infer an intact, unified centre to react against.

In his project, *Time in their Faces*, Fritz Kempe became acutely aware of the way photography can describe the chronology of aging (Fig. 23). It is an interesting example, for the photographer had not originally planned the project
in this way. In photographing people over a period of years, with roughly the
same framing of the face, the changes become quite apparent.

Photographs mark turning points. Creating documents of turning points of
this kind is what my project is really about. 43

In Australia, Sue Ford has undertaken a similar project, adding more strength to
the idea by showing herself amongst the people photographed (Fig. 24). However,
as Duane Michals has noted, photographs describe, they do not interpret or
explain.

In the journals of a stranger there is a blurring of the time scale. I have not
written a sequential diary. To do so seemed too literal and contrived. I am
concerned with the quality of a life recorded, not an exact inventory of events.
For this reason as well I have not ascribed a fixed gender, nor have I given dates.
This is a free flowing diary of associations and moods. Significantly, it is not
driven by great events, not momentous happenings, there is a timeless quality,
escaping from the sense of aging and change.

Indeed, it is written as Les Murray remarked, 'in the dream tense'. 44
Notes.

1. *journals of a stranger: documents of a life.*

2. David Malouf, *David Malouf: Johnno, short stories, poems, essays and interviews.*


4. ibid, p. 56.


7. T.E. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom, A Triumph.*

8. I have my doubts regarding the real experience.

9. Myle Harris 'Floating Ideas of a Spiritual Nature'
   *The Age,* January 7, 1989, p. 3.


14 ibid, p. 229.


This is a startling work, intense and factual. Yet not without its critics. In commenting on Capote's desire to present only an assemblage of the facts, a 'non-fiction novel', Tony Tanner remarked, 'Capote produces the effect of factitiousness rather than fact. There is something finally unreal about this true documentary...'

18 Jones, op.cit., p. 27.


21 In a sense the most ubiquitous diary form of this generation is the wallet of colour photos. They quickly find their way into large, spiral bound

albums, with sticky pages and clear acetate overlays. Often the film was processed with an option, for another free film, or perhaps, a two for one print run.

The topics found in the household snap-journal run along these general lines. Christmas, christenings, farewells, picnics, friends acting the goat, unknown strangers included because they are standing next to your mother and dearly loved, long deceased, cats, dogs and out of focus budgies.

22 Norwich, op. cit., p. v.


24 ibid, p. 140.

25 ibid, p. 220.


27 ibid, p. 51.


In the Preface Davies discusses the problems of publication of Waugh's Diaries. While the question of libel made some exclusions clear cut, Davies was more concerned with the exclusions. He maintains
they were made on the grounds of simple respect for the feelings of the living, something requiring a more individual judgement.

30 ibid, p. vi.

31 ibid, p. 787.

32 Evelyn Waugh, *A Tourist in Africa*  

33 ibid, p. 27.

34 ibid, p. 27.

35 ibid, p. 27.

36 Auberon Waugh, ‘Evelyn and Auberon’,  


38 Caroline Baum, ‘A very old wife's tale that rings true to life’.  


41 William Burroughs, introduction, Mohamed Choukri, *Jean Genet in Tangier*, by Mohamed Choukri,  

42 Simon Blau, *Eye to I*


43 Fritz Kempe, 'Time in their Faces', *European Photography* Vol 4 Issue 1, Jan/Feb/Mar, 1983, p. 20

44 Murray, op. cit., p. 179.
Chapter 4. Intimacy.

Dear Reader:

...Desires feature all of the elements you like to see in a romance, plus a more sensual, provocative story. So if you want to experience all the excitement, passion and joy of falling in love, then SILHOUETTE DESIRE is for you. 1

The presentation of intimate details, qualities, observations and so on are, to say the least, problematic. As Dorian Gray remarked,

I suffered immensely. Then it passed away. I cannot repeat an emotion. No-one can, except the sentimentalists. 2

Intimacy is often portrayed more believably in fiction. Somehow we need the suspension of ‘reality’ to allow the truth of the work to be expressed. Within many of the South American writers 3, such as Gabriel Garcia Marquez, despite the obvious departure from ‘realistic’ events, there is a quite palpable sense of reality, somehow all the more convincing for its exaggeration. Magic realism is very real. In defining magic realism, as different from the art of fantastic, Charles Merewether noted that

[In magic realism] There prevails...a faith in a marvellous reality that has the effect of enchantment insofar as it brings about a metamorphosis in perception and in things perceived. 4

As shown in these two selections, Marquez is a writer of enormous range. He has the ability to move between the clearly excessive and overblown, and the most elegantly spare writing. The first piece is from the story ‘Monologue of
Isobel Watching It Rain in Macondo', and is indicative of the rich power of magic realism.

At dawn on Thursday the smells stopped, the sense of distance lost. The notion of time, upset since the day before, disappeared completely. There was no Thursday. What should have been Thursday was a physical, jelly-like thing that could have been parted with the hands in order to look into Friday. 5

This second selection is from Love in the Time of Cholera, and reveals Marquez's ability to modulate his style, to return to an elegant simple prose.

One rainy afternoon the two of them were in the office his father kept in the house; he was drawing larks and sunflowers with coloured chalk on the tiled floor, and his father was reading by the light shining through the window, his vest unbuttoned and elastic armbands on his shirt sleeves. Suddenly he stopped reading to scratch his back with a long-handled back scratcher that had a little silver hand on the end. Since he could not reach the spot that itched, he asked his son to scratch him with his nails, and as the boy did so he had the strange sensation of not feeling his own body. At last his father looked at him over his shoulder with a sad smile.

"If I died now", he said, "you would hardly remember me when you are my age". 6

His work has enormous intensity, regardless of its narrative structure. This is the result of his acute sensibility as a writer, his ability to discuss intimacy.

The Australian writer, Judy Duffy, maintains that the experiences we have, our relationships and their machinations, no matter how dark or strange, are 'ours, we have a right to use them'. 7 Winner of second place in the 1992 Age Short Story Competition, 8 she was criticised for the frankness of her work. Her collection, Bad Mothers, 9 as well, seeks to speak of the unspoken. Future writing will concern women's health, especially breast cancer. For Duffy writing has little to do with shock value, rather it is a process of dealing with the 'important things'.

4. Intimacy.
In her film, *Night Cries-A Rural Tragedy*, Tracey Moffat makes extensive use of non-realist approaches to convey the intense, yet confused intimacy of the relationships portrayed. It is a complex investigation of the interplay of white and Aboriginal experience.

The film is self-consciously shot in a studio. We are shown a vivid set, heavily saturated colours and given strong iconographic references; Namatjira, Aboriginal singer Jimmy Little and the red centre. The effect is, as Fiona Mackie writes,

> another kind of spacetime, a certain kind of memory, of juxtaposition, interfolding spaces and times in a dreamscape not the opposite of reality, but one of its submerged and subjugated languages. Here spoken, through vision. ¹⁰

*Night Cries*, for all its lushness of image, is in marked contrast to Peter Greenaway's work. His films are driven by style and form in a deliberate challenge to emotional impact. They are intellectual in structure and content. The whimsy, with which they are filled, is cold and distanced. Greenaway discusses the plots of his films in an off-hand, dismissive manner.

> ... ‘You are what you eat’ was the last film, [*The Cook, The Thief, His Wife and Her Lover*] in the next film it's ‘You are what you read’ [*Prospero's Book*].¹¹

I would suggest that his films are largely concerned to avoid the issues of emotional intensity and intimacy, the characters are too schematic, self-consciously presented as two dimensional.

> I suppose it's my antipathy toward the idea that there's only one way to tell a story. So I have always tried to use extra-frame techniques--working with the alphabet as a way of structuring information or with number counts. ¹²

The work is driven by the visual richness, structured, not by narrative development, but by the relentless games and patterns of these 'extra-frame techniques'.
Andre Gide's work, The Immoralist, shows us the attraction and the danger of sexual expression outside accepted conventions. Gide is not so much the moralist, rather the observer of the way in which we draw into our consciousness the stringent rules of our society. We judge and punish ourselves, without the need of judicial intervention. His protagonist sees his faint, frail wife slip away from him, and he understands that he is to blame.

The moral issues within Gide's book are internal, to do with a personal response to ideas of loyalty and love. Gide looks to the delicate definitions of freedom and free choice. Larger social considerations are not under discussion.

The capacity to get free is nothing; the capacity to be free, that is the task.13

English writer, Gilbert Adair, plays with the ideas of intimacy, forbidden and unfulfilled, in his novel, Love and Death on Long Island. This is the story of a middle aged Englishman, a pompous and pedantic academic, who falls in love with a young man, the Hollywood teen idol, Ronnie. It is a dark, macabre story of humiliation, richly ironic, yet nonetheless, disturbing.

After crossing the Atlantic, and through a string of investigations, the protagonist finally meets the young man, the compelling focus of his obsession. For this novelist and well seasoned academic, deeply fond of long and ponderous phrases, the only words that he could find to convey his obsession were 'I love you!'

...I found myself madly clinging to his wrist, to his hand, holding back and then, in a fierce whisper, forcing from myself the inevitable, irreplaceable words, hackneyed and sacred: 'I love you!' 14

Adair's book lacks the elegant distance of Thomas Mann's Death in Venice, 15 or the drole and acutely detailed observations of Nabokov's Lolita. 16 In these two books similar themes are explored. An older man falling compulsively, obsessively and socially unacceptably, in love with an adolescent.

Mann's Aschenbach is driven to follow Tadzio, the perfect young man.
Afterwards he mounted again in the lift, and a group of young folk, Tadzio among them, pressed with him into the little compartment. It was the first time Aschenbach had seen him close at hand, not merely in perspective, and could see and take account of the details of his humanity. 17

Always at a distance, this is a love never to be fulfilled. It is a wearisome journey, ending in a death of romantic proportions; ‘Aschenbach’s inexplicable longing is for death’. 18 More specifically Bauer looks directly to the author when he talks of the story as Mann’s ‘most complaisant self-portrait’, in which he explores his own ‘flirtation with death’. 19

This is a moral tale, a fable of voyeuristic frustration. All the more fulsome in Visconti’s film realisation, ‘his talents as an opera producer and film director come together to achieve a magisterial strength’. 20 The sound track of which uses the broad phrases of Mahler’s Symphonies to convey the passionate longing of the obsessed Aschenbach.

Nabokov’s Lolita is a different story. Unlike Adair’s driven, dried up academic or the solid mind-set of Aschenbach, Nabokov’s Humbert Humbert is full of devious, rye wit. This is a journey through the middle ground of the American heartland. The book is necessarily outrageous, a savage commentary on the manners and values of the North American psyche, it is acerbic and unforgiving. Certainly also a period piece in its notions of sexuality.

‘The inchoate American pop world is what separates Lolita from Humbert’. 21 The drabness of the hotels, the denial of sensuality, the timeless quality of life on the road are just a few of the features that Nabokov delights in describing as evidence of an emotionally dreary nation, lost in the details of living neat, nice lives. He is undoubtedly the arch critic of the Cold War consumerism of the US.

There is a touch of the mythological and the enchanted in those large stores where according to ads a career girl can get a complete desk-to-date wardrobe, and where little sister can dream of the day when her wool jersey will make boys in the back row of the classroom drool. Life size plastic figures of snubbed-nosed children with dun-coloured,
greenish brown-dotted, faunish faces floated around me. I realised I was only a shopper in that rather eerie place where I moved fish-like, in a glaucous aquarium.  

Perhaps, by contemporary understanding the book is somewhat ‘ideologically unsound’, yet the substance of it is so prosperous, and, in hindsight, centred on a larger social critique, rather than an endorsement of sexual exploitation.  

In these three examples intimacy equals a dangerous knowledge that undoes the receiver of the wisdom. The dangers of forbidden fruit, the results of ‘walking on the wild side’, and a plethora of similar metaphors, express the absolute assurance of punishment for departing from the status quo. Intimacy then has strict guidelines, and to depart from these is to move into various territories of perversion, degradation and certain danger.

This is a tradition that has been especially applied to homosexuality. Homosexuals have often been ignored, or placed within a secondary position. Homosexuality being the trace of evil, the flaw or the one fact of failure. This dismissive notion of the gay identity runs through a string of characters including Noel Coward’s ‘resident lesbians’, in his fatuous, but amusing novel *Pomp and Circumstance*, to the limp and degenerate figure of Peter Lorey in John Huston’s Film Noire masterpiece, *The Maltese Falcon*, and thousands of other amusing, silly or just downgraded figures within popular culture.

Under the guise of liberalism the sixties saw the emergence of gay books, films, poetry and whatever else was going, such as the play, *The Boys in The Band*. However, the images of gayness, within that play especially, were based in the long standing reactionary association of gay with tragedy. In essence, gayness was still viewed as campy melodrama, never significant to a wider audience.

...If we...if we could just...not hate ourselves so much. If we could just learn to not hate ourselves quite so much.  

Ironically, these are the very images of homosexuality that have been the most significant stumbling blocks to dismantling destructive, stereotypical images. The intimacy of the homosexual experience has rarely been portrayed as part of the larger ‘human condition’.
Recently, however, popular writers such as David Leveaitt, have shown a fictional world in which gays simply exist, their presence within the narrative does not herald a great theme, they are simply present. One could also cite the British film, *My Beautiful Laundrette*.

Certainly I would agree with the logic of Dennis Altman when he notes that gay writing runs a difficult line. That is, to be either represented only within gay journals, or not to be published. New writers are generally unpublished. This is the nature of writing. Given one of the century's major recessions, and the subsequent amalgamations of many publishing houses, the prospects for publication are remote, for any sort of new fiction writer. However, gay writing is generally unrepresented in new writing journals.

As Altman notes,

... we need not so much a lesbian / gay literature as the freedom to accept the relevance of the homosexual experience, both individual and communal, to all literature.

North American writer, clearly heterosexual and recently departed, Raymond Carver, has shown that to talk of intimacy is not necessarily to talk with sentiment. Described by some commentators as a 'dirty realist', Carver shows that the words of love and intimacy are often to do with repairing the car, or making coffee, or any of a thousand other drab, domestic tasks. His situations are remarkable for their flatness and austerity, their every-day-ness. Yet the impact of the work is, often, highly charged.

In Carver's stories people talk of anything but love, when they talk of love. This seemingly detached process runs all through his work, as in this piece from the story 'Boxes'.

Jill turns the pages of her catalogue, and then stops turning them. "This is what I want", she says. "This is more like what I had in mind. Look at this, will you". But I don't look. I don't care five cents for curtains. "What is it you see out there honey?" Jill says. "Tell me".
What's there to tell? The people over there embrace for a minute, and then they go inside the house together. They leave the light burning. Then they remember, and it goes out. 30

Within the confines of a published novel the expression of very intimate details, emotions and reactions, is expected. The quality of that representation is one measure used to judge a writer's worth. Yet the truly public expression of intimate ideas seems contradictory. 31

But this dedication is for others to read:
These are private words addressed to you in public.
T.S. Elliott. 32

Elliott's words are a clear statement about the nature of intimacy. He says, unambiguously, that his poem, 'Dedication to My Wife', is a public poem. While it speaks of the private things that pass between his wife and himself, it is expressed in the arena of the outside world. The statement of intimacy is found in this recognition. Things private cannot remain so when expressed publicly, their quality changes; this truism is acknowledged by Elliott in this line. Critically, this poem is not regarded as an example of his best work. As one critic remarked, it was 'rather too intimate'. He went on,

Must we say that as Eliot came nearer within reach of the ordinary churchman in the pew he became less and less vigorous as a poet? 33

Diane Wood Middlebrook wrote of the problems she faced in writing the biography of poet Anne Sexton, who committed suicide by carbon monoxide poisoning at the age of forty five. Middlebrook was concerned with the current Post Modern notions of 'authorship', more specifically, she stated that it was an 'awareness that both author and subject in a biography are hostages to the universes of discourse that inhabit them'. 34

...the biography has never functioned simply as an arrangement of facts; it is a narrative, with a point of view...the biographer who wishes not to foreground the sensational will have to find strategies of decompression. Otherwise the story [of Anne Sexton's life] will be
orchestrated by twenty-two hospitalizations for mental illness, and will have to culminate in suicide. 35

Middlebrook tried several structures for her biography to prevent the fact of Anne Sexton's suicide defining an image of her that was falsely tragic, not representative of the complex personality Sexton was.

The temptation to attribute pre-cognitive powers to the subject of a biography was too much for H. Montgomery Hyde in his book on the life of T.E. Lawrence. At one point Hyde describes a farewell between Thomas Hardy and Lawrence where Hardy misses seeing his friend actually leave, after a fairly satisfying good-bye visit. Understandably, farewells are moving occasions for friends, however, it is extending the power of hindsight to make the following plot thickening aside,

Perhaps each had a premonition that he would not see the other again, as indeed it was to prove. 36

The suicide/sudden death of the artist often provides a perceived, and irrefutable confirmation, to any amount of hearsay and myth. The 'die young, stay pretty' principle remains firmly in place. Only with the gentle passing of very old people do we see some semblance of logic in the inevitable mortality of us all. Or indeed, the very inexplicable nature of mortality. The fact of death is the permanent seal to legend. Regardless of the reason, or nature, of that very intimate, often unknowable act of self destruction, suicide.

Of suicides, so-called suicides and simply D.O.A. cadavers, the exemplary, out-before-time person, is James Dean. 37 Dean's image is used to sell items such as sneakers, jeans and men's cologne (Fig. 25). In 1955 he earnt $10,000 for Rebel Without a Cause, in 1990 his name was licensed for over a million dollars. I mention him specifically for he is used today as a symbol of youth, (all those idealised qualities of youth).

For these companies Dean is the ultimate pitch-man, an outspoken youth who will never speak out in a way to embarrass his corporate parents...In marketing, as in memory, the myth remains unsullied. 38
With her suicide, American photographer Diane Arbus was canonised. A cult was built around her work, the mythology of which stands as one the darkest sainthoods of the seventies. As Catherine Lord shows, ‘This particular nightmare is of a woman turned into a legend that won’t turn back into history’. 39

Arbus came to be regarded as the ideologically sound voyeur (Fig. 26). She presented a world of freaks. Images such as a cigar smoking man with a contorted, contracted almost legless body, a hunched over giant dwarfing his lovingly proud parents within the everyday drabness of their apartment, a plump middle aged nudist couple with the man uncircumcised and his wife showing a bright everyday smile (the pair of them looking fleshy and obscene), tired transvestites, a series on mentally retarded people in party masks playing games and lots of normal people that just looked odd. ‘They all look strange—even “straight” people look weird’. 40

Arbus’ work has become the legitimate window to subject matter that is often regarded as off limits, if only because of the intimacy that she passed over in the process of making it public.

In a sense, the alarming feature of the work of Diane Arbus is the context, not the content. Both socially, and legislatively, our understandings of the people that Arbus photographed has changed in the nineties. Perhaps these really are ‘normal’ people, only made freaks by the Arbus ‘look’. She was the freak photographer, and was herself a little strange, as the folklore goes. And of course, of lynch-pin importance to the Arbus mythology, she did commit suicide. (Though there is little discussion concerning the real nature of this tragedy.)

As Lord shows Arbus’ life was presented in lushly bizarre terms, of highly questionable accuracy, by her biographer, Patricia Boswell. 41 To make the photographs respectable Arbus, herself, had to be made into some sort of freak. A child of a wealthy New York family, Russian Jews originally, according to Boswell, she was always drawn to the off-beat and the exotic.

Her suicide confirmed it all.
A similar thing is happening to Robert Mapplethorpe following his awful death from AIDS. His photographs of flowers are often understood, within the art school and gay Mapplethorpe folklore, as very explicitly sexual images, in line with his homo-erotic images (Fig. 27 and 28). Despite his own image-consolidating remarks, his flowers fall into a long, established tradition of photography, that includes such non-gay photographers as Max Dupain (Fig.29) and Imogen Cunningham (Fig. 20). Of course, this is an observation that is usually overwhelmed by the power of the urban myth.

Both Arbus and Mapplethorpe worked within photographic genres that derived their strength, not only from their supposed truthfulness, but also from their dalliance with sights unseen. For Arbus it was the world of her ‘freaks’ and for Mapplethorpe it was a lush world of naked, proudly homo-erotic men. In death, these two photographers have attained sainthood.

Larry Clark, however, seems to have remained a lesser light. His images are of people shooting up and/or fighting, naked or exposing themselves, of couples and groups having sex and/or taking drugs. They are prostitutes and long term drug users, as well as adolescents off the street. The immediate, almost home snap innocence of the photographic style greatly increases the impact of the shots. This is at the heart of the tension that Larry Clark is working with in photographs. We believe these are real pictures, real fresh-faced boys and girls, naked and pushing needles in their arms (Fig. 53).

Clark's viewpoint is slightly ambiguous, we are not sure of his position, while he hates the waste of life, yet he is also neutral to many aspects of what he shows. His photography is his autobiography, he lived this life, spending time in prison, mixing with young prostitutes and having a long-standing addition to speed. Yet his portrayal of this intimate world, his adult life is, to say the least, brutal in its supposed clarity. He never rejected his past, although he did, at points, weary of the life.

To give his photographs a legitimacy they are seen as honest. ‘In these photographs we see life and death with the cold glass eye of the camera’. Certainly they are heralded as brave. ‘Into the arena of artistic endeavour gaseous with rhetoric about “vision” and “images” stepped a man who wasn’t afraid to look at his life in pictures.’
To my knowledge Clark is still alive, so his reputation is still open to interpretation. To date, he does not seem to have been taken up as have Mapplethorpe and Arbus, maybe his images are too strong for wider publication. Or perhaps the last few years have seen him move away from realism that does not state its position. The perceived legitimacy of the documentary style has been eroded in the early 90s. It is no longer enough to claim 'honesty' or brave imagery, not the least because of the reporting of the Vietnam War and more recently, The Falklands, and that media event of the decade, The Gulf War.

Traditionally we expect a clear, often humanitarian, sometimes overtly political judgement in reportage. The photographers at Magnum operated from such a clear standpoint, perhaps summarised as the dignity of humanity, or some such optimistic notion. As Irwin Shaw wrote, in regard to the Magnum collection on Paris,

> There is a healing magic about photographs. In a curious way they conquer time, or at least the time of your own life. 45

The American photographer, Eugene Smith, also sought to show a human side to his photography, particularly in reporting the tragedy of mercury poisoning in Japan (Fig. 30). One of the first documentarists, American Lewis Hine in the early part of the century, was working to expose the appalling conditions for young children working in factories (Fig. 31).

Of course, the nature of documentary work is not fixed, any more than any other imagery (Fig. 2).

Avedon is able in only five years to finish a complete and perfect documentation of an essentially fictional West, a West that is complete and perfect only in that Avedon's photographic West is an exact mirror of his own psychological West. 46

This comment reflects a recurrent theme of the Post Modern environment. If authorship is open to investigation, then the very nature of the representation of the 'real world', is also under challenge.
In all three examples, Arbus, Clark and Mapplethorpe, there is an attempt to show a 'real' world. Mapplethorpe is the most recent work, and significantly it is the most theatrical. Clark is the most traditional, 'showing it the way it is', no matter what. Arbus is the most atypical, for the work she produced, and the way it has been presented, are fairly unique.

Within the Post Modern setting of contemporary photography it is much more common to find staging of images. There is a quite discernible flight from the realism of the photographic image. Again, the notion that 'fictional' images can say more than the real ones.

As Isobel Crombie has noted,

\[
\text{Naturalism, so held to be the foundation of photography, is abandoned in favour of openly declared theatrical fabrications.} \quad 47
\]

Of course this is very much in line with the deconstructionist and semiotic readings of photographs. There is a fairly common assertion that meaning is ascribed by the viewer, not held within the image as an immutable fact. Meaning is open to negotiation and investigation, what Middlebrook called, the 'postmodern anxiety about authorship'. \(48\)

The issue of authorship is open to discussion in the work of Australian photographer, Julie Brown-Rrap. The work is relevant to the issue of intimacy, Brown-Rrap being concerned to investigate the representations of women's bodies in art. Often she poses herself naked, as in the work shown in the Australian Biennale, 1988, \textit{Gradi\textbackslash{}a/Gradi\textbackslash{}a-Philosophies of the Boudoir, 1985/6}. (Fig. 32).

\[
\text{Julie Brown-Rrap poses her own body in photographic constructs in which iconic images from the traditional male history of art are deconstructed from their known context and re-worked as radical statements within the cultural context of feminism.} \quad 49
\]

The work is about intimacy, yet it is not, in itself, intimate. The images are lush and colourful, but they put the viewer at a distance. They are stylised, making use of appropriated postures and compositions.
Brown-Rap poses the liberation of the audience, through the rhetoric of contestation and interrogation of the otherness of Woman. This contestation and process of recognition is staged over the representation of the female body. 50

In the journals intimacy is implied, rather than stated. We are given indications and intimations, both in the imagery and the text.

The water was blood temperature, I felt no edge where my skin met with it... 51

The journal titles are deliberately romantic, engaging a certain lushness of style.

I knew I should feel relaxed, or welcomed, but instead I felt alien to my surroundings. That was the most common sensation. Like a kiss from a stranger. There was all the form of intimacy, but no substance, no resonance, no sense of being close, despite the soft feeling of his moist lips. 52

Finally, not all diarists are brutally frank and open. At times they may be recording the skeleton of their lives, keeping the interior, inner life hidden. Sometimes, as in the work of Raymond Carver, there is an intensity beyond the written word. What Les Walkling has referred to as a concern for what is happening behind the camera, as opposed to what is in front, being photographed (Fig. 22).

Then he asked me if I had a good business. I told him businesses like mine were up and down, but when you made money, it was very good. He looked nervous, as though he did not understand, or perhaps had asked a question that was too personal.53
Notes.

   Cover notes.

2. Oscar Wilde 'The Picture of Dorian Gray', *The Best Known Works of Oscar Wilde*,

3. Of course they are a loosely aligned group, including writers such as Isabel Allende and Manuel Puig.


5. Gabriel Garcia Marquez, 'Monologue of Isabel Watching It Rain in Macondo', *Collected Stories*


8. Judy Duffy, 'Photographs from Beneath the Surface',
   *The Age*, 1


10. Fiona Mackie, 'A Fractal De-Framing In Film',
    *Photofile*, Thirty One Spring 1990, p. 45.

4. Intimacy.

12 ibid, p. 74.

13 Andre Gide, *The Immoralist.*

14 Gilbert Adair, *Love and Death on Long Island*

15 Thomas Mann, *Death in Venice.*

16 Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita.*

17 Mann, op. cit., p. 36.


19 Arnold Bauer, *Thomas Mann,*


21 W.T. Lhamon, Jr., *Deliberate Speed: The Origins of a Cultural Style in the American 1950s.*


23 Kubrick went on to direct Peter Sellers and George C. Scott in the sardonic *Dr Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and...* 4. Intimacy.
Love The Bomb, 1964, a film which quite unrelentingly satirised the Cold War preparedness of the US. Certainly this was a strong statement for a world that had only a few years before endured the trauma of the Cuban Missile Crisis and the debacle of the Bay of Pigs. School children, even in Australia, were sent home at the height of the Missile Crisis by their teachers for fear that the long awaited Third World War had finally started.


This phrase, 'walk on the wild side' was quite elegantly reworked by Lou Reed in his song of the same title.


'It is notable that The Maltese Falcon is among the first Hollywood films to make explicit the theme of male homosexuality.'


Still, within novels such as The Lost Language of Cranes, the discussion is concerned with the themes of acceptance, coming out and the base survival of the homosexual.
Dennis Altman, 'A Closet of One's Own',

Raymond Carver, *Elephant and other Stories*.

*Hinch at Seven* is based the 'B' grade representation of emotive issues.

'A Dedication to my Wife' by T.S. Elliott.

To whom I owe the leaping delight
That quickens my senses in our waking time
And the rhythm that governs the repose of our sleeping time,

    The breathing in unison

Of lovers whose bodies smell of each other
Who think the same thoughts without need of speech
And babble the same speech without need of meaning.

No peevish winter wind shall chill
No sullen tropic shall wither
The roses in the rose garden which is ours and ours only

But this dedication is for others to read:
These are private words expressed to you in public.

Martin Jarrett-Kerr, 'Of Clerical Cut: Retrospective reflections on Eliot's churchmanship',

Diane Wood Middlebrook, 'Postmodernism and the Biographer',
*Revealing Lives: Autobiography, Biography and Gender*,
Susan Groag Beil and Marilyn Yalom, ed.,

Middlebrook, op. cit., p. 159.

4. Intimacy.
H. Montgomery Hyde, *Solitary in the Ranks: Lawrence of Arabia as airman and private soldier.*

Hype and gossip aside, James Dean was perhaps another Dustin Hoffman or Matt Dillon. A talented young man, good looks to suit the time of his arrival, pumped by Hollywood, and very keen to join the strange system of film stars that rewards the clever, good-looking boys; if they want it enough.

There is nothing to say that has not been said. Most people agree he was a fine, but young actor, beginning what looked like a good career in Hollywood. Death put the seal on the 'gos'.


Lord's article is concerned to put into some perspective the 'hagiography gone berserk' as she describes Boswell's biography.

Patricia Boswell, *Diane Arbus: A Biography.*

I am yet to cite the source of this comment by Mapplethorpe. It falls in line with so many of the urban myths that abound concerning him.


48 Bell and Yalom, op. cit., p. 164.


51 From the journals.

52 From the journals.

53 From the journals.
Chapter 5. Gender.

I'll be a woman or a man
I'll be a double-double decker tram
I'll be anything you want me to be
I'm pretty weak at seven
Stronger by eleven
But when I'm drunk at twelve I'm me

The 1980's and 1990's have seen the firm establishment of the issues of gender, and their diverse representations, within contemporary art practice and criticism. As Diane Wood Middlebrook notes,

Gender relations are embedded at the very root of the subject-object split that Post Modernism has foregrounded as its special territory.

Historically we see this process in action more easily. In describing nineteenth century medical practices Anne Digby talks of the 'biological straitjacket' that was applied to understanding women's health. Menstruation was linked to madness, as a matter of biology.

This image of the female--periodically predisposed to hysteria and other complaints--found wide currency in Victorian literature, where its self-evident truth precluded much intellectual scrutiny being given to it.

In his somewhat solidly written article, Design and Gender, Phil Goodall explores the political implications of gender and design in household appliances, revealing the ways in which machines are built according to assumptions about the different ways men and women think, and behave. Power tools and sewing
machines, for example, have many features that reflect the designer's assumptions about the gender of the end user.

It is not for nothing that the expression 'man-made' refers to a vast range of objects that have been fashioned from physical materials. 

Certainly, I would add that it is interesting to see the establishment of the hair dryer market for men, an appliance that even the most sophisticated man would have shunned in the 1950s.

From a sociological viewpoint Bob Connell contends that gender is best understood as a 'linking concept'. More specifically he states that gender 'is a process rather than a thing'.

Indeed, our bodies reflect our time and culture. It is David Malouf's observation that bodies were different when he was a lad.

This contemporary body we move in, which seems to belong so deeply to the world of nature, is a work of art, the product of convention, fashion, diet...and pure idea and the power of advertising. The body of forty years ago, though anatomically the same, will show, when we observe it closely, a subtle difference.

In Malouf's autobiography, Twelve Edmonstone Street, he moves through his childhood home, reflective and acute in his remembrance. Yet the style is quite without sentiment. He teases out the expression of identity within the material world of a weather board Brisbane cottage. Bathroom doors had no locks, they were not places to linger for long periods, for any reason.

So to present images of men or women may be a problem. How is it to be accomplished? So complex is the discussion, the artist could easily be immobilised.

Certainly the earlier project, Images of Manhood, was deeply involved with the specific representations of manhood, and the broader questions of gender. Alternative therapists sometimes talk of illness as being 'feelings made flesh'. In a more academic context Elizabeth Grosz observed that,
89.

The body is the unspoken underside of mind and reason. It is thus an extremely pertinent strategic term in so far as it occupies the same terrain as reason, virtue and knowledge, being the negative or inverted double of each. 7

In looking at current representations of men, within the popular media, there has been a growing sexualisation of the images of masculinity. From about the mid 50s on, good looking men start to appear within the Speedo advertisements, and of course, that great Australian, Chesty Bond, has been around since the 30s. Peter Spearritt observed that from the mid 20s Australian poster art portrayed the images of an idealised, male youth. Lifesavers became the key graphic figures in posters for the opening of The Sydney Harbour Bridge, 1932.

The adoration of the healthy male body, after the great war, particularly of the lifesaving movement, is partly because 60,000 of 300,000 men in World War 1 were killed. Another 60,000 were badly injured. You had a 1 in 3 chance of death or injury in the First War... perhaps it could be seen as a sort of national grieving. There's not much work done on it though. 8

However in the 80's a new sort of man was appearing on the glossy pages. A widely viewed example, and one that has produced an army of imitators, was the Sheridan Sheet campaign. Not only on the pages of Vogue Living, but also on posters covering the sides of buildings, this carefully planned campaign exhibited lush, softly lit, images of men (Fig. 33). Perfect, fleshy young men photographed naked, peacefully asleep between the folds of 100% cotton sheets.

These images are assuredly erotic in a manner that is usually reserved for women. I would contend that the erotic element is obviously crucial. Paul Lewis has argued that such images are more concerned with 'aestheticised power', as against erotic power. 9 The difference is in emphasis, and while interesting, is secondary to a more important observation, that is: men are represented not only as physically powerful, they are now conspicuous objects of desire.

This shift in the popular imagery of men can be seen in the work of American photographer Bruce Weber, the Sheridan Sheet images having their antecedents

5. Gender.
in the extensive campaigns Weber shot for Calvin Klien. His men are not perfect, but they are, in general, quiet and fleshy. The element of sexuality, both hetero- and homo erotic, is essential to the imagery.

In his film, Broken Noses, Weber presents an obsessively detailed exploration of the maleness of the young boxer, Andy Minsker. All the elements of Weber's still photography are found in the film, the controlled high contrast, emphasis on the torso and the smile of the boxer. There is also the dwelling on a celebrity status, as found in his photographs of Matt Dillon (Fig. 34) sleepily lying in bed, or the tired Chet Baker (Fig. 35) living out the last years of a once brilliant career, now devastated by a long term heroin addiction. Similar observations could also be made concerning American photographer, Herb Ritts, although his images are more sculptured and delicate.

Of course, we are led back to Mapplethorpe (Fig 27 and 28). Although his work falls clearly within the fine art area, there is a cross-over of imagery, an exchange whereby people such as Mapplethorpe have become well published heroes outside the art world.

The lustrous surface of both body and photograph announces the production of a glorified Futurist masculinity -- a perfect production to be consumed without wastage.

The debate concerning the nature of gender representation has traditionally centred on images of woman. A great deal has been written, from feminist perspectives, in which the nature of the male gaze is explored. Kathy Myers makes the point that 'contextualisation' is the key to regarding images as pornographic or not. She comments in regard to an image of a naked woman, from a 'man's' magazine.

Selling the female sexuality to a woman is not the same as selling it to a man. The anticipated gender is crucial in structuring the image. For example, look at the angle of the woman's head ... The pornographic model's face is angled towards the viewer. Her mouth open, a classic signifier of sexual receptiveness and anticipation.
Marginal groups are always the big losers in the stereotyping process, as Germaine Greer points out.

The lesbian is more tortured than any other woman by the suspicion that she is a sort of mock-male: she more than another will be teased by the alien tradition of representing women as sex objects, as the 'other'.

So there is an interesting question of context. Ironically the men of the Sheridan Sheets campaign are not perceived as gay, although they undoubtedly appeal to the relatively high disposable income of singles. Of course, many gays have children and have families, however, market researchers do isolate out specialist markets. To be overtly homosexual could hardly be advanced as a good mass marketing posture.

Australian artist, Juan Davila, had his work, Stupid as a Painter, impounded during the Fourth Biennale of Sydney, 1982. It was considered obscene, full of violent, homosexual imagery. The then Premier, Neville Wran, upheld certain libertarian traditions, evoking a society in which art was not to be censored. He ordered the painting to be reinstated, although the Gallery director, Edmund Capon had lost interest and it was exhibited elsewhere.

However, Davila stands out, for his painting is so overtly provocative and aggressive in its use of sexual imagery. In 1991 he produced a large painting, Nothing If Not Abnormal (Fig 36), showing Paul Keating and Bob Hawke in what can only be described as unexpected and less than flattering poses, and dresses. They are also engaged in activities that are highly uncharacteristic of their public images. Davila’s work is atypical of contemporary practice both for its assertive sexual imagery and its specific political comment, the Gulf War. As Terry Smith remarked, in relation to this painting, ‘Direct commentary on current politics is rare in recent Australian art’.

I would add that direct use of pornographic imagery is even rarer. Davila is still very much in the ‘shock a lot’ school of the sixties, playing off the aesthetic niceness of mainstream art, and terrifying the middle classes in the process. Like Eliza’s father, in Shaw’s Pygmalion, Davila hates ‘middle class morality’. However, given the trenchant nature of his stance, forged in the heat of South American politics, it is unlikely that he will capitulate in the way Eliza’s father
92.
did, embarking on a lecture tour of the US. Undoubtedly, Davila will be shocking
them for years to come.

Interestingly, contemporary work, concerned with the body, has moved away
from confrontational stances. Explicit imagery is no longer seen as political, as
it was, say in the OZ trials of the sixties. Pornography is read as essentially
exploitative, in some manner or other. This is not to infer that contemporary
thinking is galloping back to the moralism and prudery of the past, rather,

...[changes in the portrayal of gay men and lesbians relate] to a wider
shift in feminism in the 1980s which increasingly emphasised male
violence and women as victims. Pornography became the symbolic focus
for a challenge to male violence, and lesbian and gay pornography
became as much the object of attack as heterosexual. For many, it
seemed, the danger of violence lurked in any explicit representation of
sex. 17

Roland Barthes elegantly delineates an aspect of pornography in his seminal
work, Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography, when he observes that

Pornography ordinarily represents the sexual organs, making them into a
motionless object (a fetish), like an idol that does not leave its niche;
...at most it amuses me (and even then, boredom follows quickly). The
erotic photograph, on the contrary (and this is its very condition), does
not make the sexual organs into a central object; it may very well not
show them at all; it takes the spectator outside its frame.18

In 1980 there was an exhibition in London titled 'Women's Images of Men'. It
brought forth a strong response, and a book of the same name. The editors
remarked in their Preface,

Whereas, for instance, a male artist is free to show a pictures of the
female nude and to share intimacies with his audience, a reversal of
these roles is not welcomed. 19

While the principle remains true, the ubiquitous nature of male imagery, in the
style of the Sheridan Sheet campaign, signals some sort of re-alignment of the

5. Gender.
representation of gender within the imagery of popular culture. The political insights of the 70s may need micro-adjustments in the 90s. This is a time when the meat pie, the 100% cotton sheet and the Reebok alike, are sold by association with the well formed pectoral muscle of a young man.

There is now a much greater concern with the ways in which bodies have been represented as images of oppression. In one of Barbara Kruger's images she shows the face of a woman, half in positive, half in negative with the simple text, *Your Body is a Battleground*. Kruger's work is all about the interplay of text and image (Fig.37), what Abagail Solomon-Godeau has, rather extravagantly, described as 'iconic lexigraphic sleights-of-hand.'

In regard to 'body work' one could cite Australian artist Julie Brown-Rrap's work, (discussed in other sections of this thesis), or more particularly, English photographer, Jo Spence and the American photographer, Cindy Sherman.

Spence has created a whole range of work, often using her own body within the frame. Most notably in her work, *Picture of Health*, parts One and Two. This work explicitly deals with her surgery for breast cancer. The work centres on loss of control for the patient, and especially the breast cancer patient. The body of the patient is taken over by the medical profession (Fig. 38).

The work is direct, and in no sense designed to be 'aesthetic'. As Dianne Losche noted, when viewing her work in Australia during Spence's 1990 visit,

> Her photographic work undermines that aesthetic space which depends on seduction for its existence. However the distancing effect depends upon the viewer not turning away. The issue now...is whether the art of seduction, wedded as it is to phallocentric institutions, still rules the eyes of the beholders.

If Spence is concerned to address the reality of powerlessness and, strategies for subsequent empowerment, Cindy Sherman is concerned to explore a fabricated self (Fig. 39). Sherman’s work is about artifice and invention, created personae that, in the words of Whitney Chadwick,
...expose the “anonymous” voice behind the camera or media language as speaking from and for the patriarchal order. 22

Her photographs challenge the idea that there might be an innate, unmediated female sexuality by exposing the fiction of a ‘real’ woman behind the images that Western culture constructs for our consumption in film and advertising media. 23

There is an unmistakable sense of humour in Sherman’s work. She plays with the melodrama of popular imagery, the early work titled, Untitled Film Stills. The aim is to completely remove the ‘real’ Cindy Sherman. We are left with a catalogue of images, fabrications of stereotypical identities. The work is highly energetic and inventive.

At least, one is entertained by the work’s dramatic spectacle and, at best, imaginatively engaged by the photographer’s serious quest for points of contact between self and its manifestations and between the self and the external world. 24

Perhaps this contact point between ‘self and the external world’ is most acutely visible in the representation and portrayal of AIDS sufferers. 25 How are they to be conceptualised? The last few years have seen enormous changes in the imaging of groups with conditions such as deafness, sight or mobility impairment. The notion of a ‘disabled person’ has been strenuously redefined away from a singular, reductionist meaning. Yet little of those insights is apparent in the representations and presentation of AIDS to the public. AIDS has become so difficult to deal with in a visual representation.

The disease has forced an awareness of certain social facts—that is, a more realistic profile of human sexuality—in a way not recently encountered. The problem is to deal with this new information, as well as realise that, in the end, it is a disease, like many others. Dennis Altman was by no way original when stated in 1986,

Viruses know neither nationality nor sexuality, and AIDS is American and homosexual only in the sense that the first group in which the disease was discovered was American homosexuals. 26
Simon Watney put it all a little more carefully when he observed...

...the representation of AIDS is a site of complex struggles between rival and competing estimations of disease and, at a further extreme, of our very estimation of the range and meanings of human sexuality. 27

In representing people with AIDS the problem is how to represent them. Admittedly, at present, the majority of cases are homosexual men, however, that group is notable for its diversity in terms of class, educational experience, and most other sociological indices. As well, the American and African experiences show that the coming years will see a dramatic broadening of the profile of AIDS sufferers, so that the notions of a gay disease will be dissipated as the disease becomes more clearly widespread. The basketball player, Magic Johnson, achieved the tragic fame of being one the first public figures to be infected as a result of living a heterosexual lifestyle. 28 Tina Chow was reported as being ‘the first female celebrity to declare she had contracted AIDS through a heterosexual affair’. 29

American photographer, Nicolas Nixon, using a large format camera, has attempted to show PWAs, (people with AIDS), as individuals (Fig. 40). In examining the work critic Douglas Crimp remarks that they still persist in showing only quite ravaged people, at the end of their battle with the virus. Not that Crimp is deeply critical, simply he raises the ever present problem of avoiding what he has termed ‘phobic images’. In reviewing a film called Danny, he notes that it perpetuates the stereotypes of people with AIDS.

The unwillingness to show PWAs as active, in control of their lives, as acting up and fighting back, is the fear that they are still sexual. 30

All of the problems of association come to the fore. Susan Sontag takes up this process in her book AIDS and Its Metaphors. 31 In this elegant essay she argues that AIDS is the most ‘meaning laden’ disease. Its always being seen as a sign of decadence, a source of guilt for the infected or a justification for the brutalisation of selected groups. She maintains that AIDS is just a disease, as ghastly as any, but just a disease, symbolising nothing.

5. Gender.
Given that the journey as metaphor is often a masculinist myth, it is important to relate in some meaningful way to the contemporary currents of 'theory based work'. Issues of gender and its representation are of underlying importance to the journals of a stranger.

The original M.A. Proposal for the Manhood Project was largely concerned with the questions of gender, that is, personal notions and representations of the male identity. Importantly the journals of a stranger is still concerned to explore those themes, but in a less self-conscious and more indirect, perhaps subliminal manner. For this reason I have presented an unnamed and ungendered diarist, allowing he/she to move between the polarities of masculine and feminine.

Virginia Woolf's Orlando not only spans the centuries but painlessly crosses the barrier from man to woman. After a long rest, (but no surgery),

He stretched himself. He rose. He stood upright in complete nakedness before us, and while the trumpets pealed Truth! Truth! Truth! we have no choice left but confess - he was a woman...Orlando had become a woman - there is no denying it. But in every other respect, Orlando remained precisely as he had been. The change of sex, though it altered their future, did nothing to alter their identity.

Virginia Woolf is of great interest as a writer not only because of her approach to time and consciousness, but also because of her concepts of identity.

The Jungian notion of individuation is the lifelong process of balancing the animus and the anima, the masculine and feminine sides of the personality. For Jung the human being is androgynous. Individuation may be simply expressed as an engagement with all parts of the psyche, at some level. This dynamic experience of the whole person--including the 'bad' (shadow side), as well as the masculine and feminine--was for him, an integral part of the process of living.

Jungian psychologist, Robert Johnson writes with great intensity of the Parsifal myth, the long journey to find the Holy Grail. It is for Johnson, the journey of men becoming complete.
So in removing a fixed identity from the *journals of a stranger* a greater mobility becomes possible. I am concerned to explore the interplay of feelings and mood achieved through placement of image with text. A series of images may set up an expectation for the reader which is modulated and altered by the inclusion of a piece of text, skewing the predicted direction of the *journals* towards unexpected territories.
Notes.

1 Sasha Soldatow, 'Broadway Melody',
   _The Adventures of Rock-n-roll Sally._

2 Diane Wood Middlebrook, 'Postmodernism and the Biographer',
   _Revealing Lives: Autobiography, Biography and Gender._
   ed., Susan Groag Bell and Marilyn Yalom,

3 Anne Digby, 'Women's Biological Straitjacket', _Sexuality and_
   _Subordination: Interdisciplinary studies of gender in the nineteenth_
   _century._ Susan Mendus and Jane Rendall Ed.,

4 Phil Goodall, 'Design and Gender',
   _Block No. 9,_ 1983, p. 50.

5 R.W. Connell, _Gender and Power: Society, the Person and Sexual_ _Politics._

6 David Malouf, _Twelve Edmonstone Street._

7 Elizabeth Grosz, 'Bodies, desire & representation',
   _Artlink,_ Vol. 8 No. 1, March-May 1988, p. 36

8 Peter Spearritt, Director of the Centre for Australian Studies, Monash

9 Paul Lewis, 'Men on Pedestals',
   _Ten 8,_ No 17, 1985, p. 29.

99.


   This publication contains an extended discussion of the censorious response of some sections of the Australian community to the work of Juan Davila. Interestingly, in 1992, the new Museum of Contemporary Art, situated at Circular Quay, contains several of Davila's work. No complaints so far.


20. Abagail Solomon-Godeau, 'Winning the Game When the Rules have been Changed: Art Photography and Postmodernism', 5. *Gender.*
Watney and Gupta carefully collage a rich and contradictory picture of AIDS rhetoric. Although drawn from English and American sources, the same lurching debate has been conducted in the Australian press. A recent, (March, 1992) and unexpected voice being Dr Fred Hollows, who has claimed on several occasions that the gays had taken over the AIDS debate. Indeed, it is one of the points of contention that gays have, or have not, contributed to the prevention programs responsibly. Depending on which article you read, Australia has either coped brilliantly, or mis-managed the whole thing. However, the debate has advanced from Councillor Elderidge’s plan. As a Wagga Wagga City Alderman he suggested, in the late 80’s, that an enclosure be built, outside city limits, to house people who present as HIV positive.
28 Michael Fumento, ‘Do You Believe in Magic?’
The Independent Monthly.
April, 1992, p. 12.
In this article Michael Fumento explores at length the complications of AIDS prevention, Magic Johnson's revelation and the power of the media.

29 Meredith Etherington-Smith, ‘Ciao, Bella.’

30 Douglas Crimp, ‘Portraits of People with AIDS’

31 Susan Sontag, AIDS and Its Metaphors.

32 Helen Ennis, Australian Photography: The 1980's.

33 Virginia Woolf, Orlando.
Great Britain: Triad/ Panther, 1977, p. 86/7.

34 Robert Johnson, He, Understanding Masculine Psychology.
This volume is part of a series with its companion volume titled, as one might expect, She, Understanding Feminine Psychology.
Chapter 6. Landscape.

Who is ever without his landscape.¹

[ W.H. Auden. ]

The representation of landscape is always a process of creation; we find the aspect and quality in a landscape we look for as our understanding of an image is refined through our personal sense of place. This is as evident in the 'very ordinary snapshot' as it is in the calculated and planned fine print.

For Paul the photograph was a lens concentrating the unforgetableness of one English morning. It was a very ordinary snapshot, so modest in its three or four elements that at any moment afterwards he could assemble the pieces together in memory. ²

The process is put more formally by Ross Gibson when he states,

Admittedly, the climate, the vegetation, the landscape - everything we designate as 'nature' - do give life, a particular tone to any place. But the entity called 'nature' is meaningful only in the context of the cultural patterns that are constantly being negotiated in a society. ³

In describing the Australian landscape Manning Clark observed,

'England's a green and pleasant land'. But the Australian colour is not green: it is a pale brown, a grey, a pink or an ochre. It took me a lifetime to drop that European recoil in horror at our arid and harsh land, and see a fragile beauty in all those places I had earlier not wanted to know were there. ⁴

Like Manning Clark's eloquent admission of his own Anglophile predisposition the Pictorialist photographers of the early part of this century, such as Kauffmann,
found in the Australian landscape a soft European light, romantic and gentle.

During the interwar years photographer Fred Flood and watercolourist Amy Heap worked for the Western Mail (Fig. 41). Of their work historian Stannage wrote,

> Both heard happy shepherds chanting by streams in a Westralian Arcady; and both sought out what was beautiful in nature and in human nature. In the images they created of Western Australia there was no room for conflict, sorrow, pain and deprivation. And they reconciled the land and the people to England. 5

Some photographers like Harold Cazneaux moved through from soft focus to the hard edge of the emerging modernist styles. He was one of the few to bridge the gap between the two attitudes (Fig. 42).

Max Dupain, regarded by many as one of the great Modernist photographers, dabbled early on with the imagery of the Pictorialists, brooding skies and melancholic vistas, but quickly moved on to find a harsh, brilliant light of intensity and clarity (Fig. 43). One that was well suited to the graphic forms of his Modernist vision. In discussing Dupain’s work in the 1930s, for Ure Smith’s magazine The Home, Nancy Underhill noted

> To a much greater degree than Harold Cazneaux, Dupain was willing to push Australian photography into the realm of the unreal. Home was the obvious venue for such a pursuit. There is no doubt that Max Dupain mastered the look and strategies and capitalized on the inherent unfixed aesthetic position of photography. 6

Dupain has worked as a photographer for Harry Seidler for many years. An architect operating in a direct line from Walter Gropius and the Bauhaus, Seidler has stood firmly against the rising tide of Post Modernism, often characterised by self consciously decorative structures, neo-classical allusions and hectically layered surface treatments. What Terry Smith has unkindly referred to as ‘banal mannerism’. 7

Both the Modernist and, the Pictorialist photographers, (although in quite different ways), understood their images as representations of the real world.
The Modernist particularly looked to the beauty of the new age of beautiful technology, exemplified in the ‘modern’ technologies and materials of the time, namely steel, glass and concrete. They were excited and inspired by the forms and subject matter of the emerging ‘modern’ world around them. Ian Burn described the process well when he remarked that:

Pictures of the landscape are tangible objects specific to place, objects which can be possessed and which symbolise a cultural possession of the land. Over the past two centuries the landscape has been invented and reinvented many times, in the context of serving different cultural, social, and political needs.

Contemporary photographers are often not so concerned with documenting the real world. American photographer, Duane Michals, stated his aim as photographing what is not visible, not seen. With great charm and wit Michals points out the dangerous three ‘B’s of photography; the banal, the beautiful and the bizarre. Aspects that he strenuously, and quite successfully, avoids in his own work.

Curator of Photography at the Australian National Gallery, Canberra, Helen Ennis, wrote in Australia’s Bi-Centennial year that:

To generalise, Post Modernist photography shows little concern with naturalism. It does not have much to do with photographic traditions and draws on a range of other sources, including painting, film, television, popular magazines and propaganda. It suggests excess, artifice and decadence through emphasising the seductive physical qualities of the photograph as an object.

In her introduction to the recent exhibition Twenty Contemporary Australian Photographers, Isobel Crombie wrote:

The concerns of many of the Victorian-based photographers featured here are related less to the documentation of the external, natural world and more to the depiction of a private reality.

Tracy Moffat’s work is a fine example. Something More, presents an image
constructed within a studio set, infused with a whole range of cross cultural elements, and using fully such 'stagey' techniques as painted backgrounds and tableau arrangements for the subjects. Her work is of interest for it exploits the unreality of such set-ups to explore quite profound political comments concerning Aboriginal issues. The level of exploration is subliminal, rather than overt or specific (Fig. 44).

Gerald Murnane's novel, The Plains, explores the creation and discovery of a 'personal' landscape.

An explorer's task is to postulate the existence of a land beyond the known land. Whether or not he finds that land and brings back news of it is unimportant. He may choose to lose himself in it forever and add one more to the sum of unexplored lands.

The landscape photographs that I have included are observational, passive, calm and reflective. There is a considered way in which distant and close up photographs are made. My observer is making detailed diary notes of the location, as though a documentation of the topography is being undertaken.

While most of the work was shot at Wilson's Promontory, there are inclusions from quite distant locations, such as Downside near Wagga in NSW. The detail shots of shells are not related to the Promontory, (the shells were purchased from a flower shop in Melbourne).

The work however, maintains a unity and cohesion, within a predominant style, being established in the long shots and carrying through into the detail images. There is a credibility created that is intended to forestall any questioning regarding the authenticity of the various elements of the series. It is an Australian landscape, or more intentionally, a pastiche.

It is important to note however that I am not attempting to create a difficult riddle in which the viewer is drawn to find the mistake, pick the inconsistency. I intend this jumbled landscape to be a gentle fiction.

The illusion, however, is that of a real place, and the journey, of which the photographs are a record, is a 'real' journey. Undertaken, perhaps, as

conscientiously, and with not dissimilar intent, as Boswell and Johnson's wanderings through Scotland and the Hebrides in the late eighteenth century. Of those excursions Boswell remarked, with his usual, mannered eloquence, that the trips were taken for 'the accession of new images in my mind'. 15

The landscape photographs of the journals of a stranger are evocations of a 'sense of place', all fictitious in that strict sense that people often read landscape photography, ('...but where, exactly, was it taken...'). Yet, as I have suggested, they represent the remembered experience of a place, by the diarist of the journals. In that sense our mind always mixes and matches experience, makes unexpected associations and blends together our memories.

Perhaps it is appropriate, with some irony, to refer to the work of Robert Frank. A documentary photographer whose gritty, 'real life' work seemed a fiction to his many critics.

A Swiss immigrant to New York just after the Second World War, Frank shot a startling and definitive statement of the USA. titled The Americans. Undertaken with the fresh eye of the newcomer Frank produced an essay of documentary photographs that set the standard for years to come. They embodied something of the uncompromising, anti-establishment ethos of the beats, and met with a similar response (Fig. 45).

He generally photographed what the cold war US denied, or felt was off limits. It was the America of downmarket diners, segregated Negro life, the drabness of highway towns and the exotic strangeness of upmarket white Americans. In appropriately over blown beat style Jack Kerouac wrote of 'the gray film that caught the actual pink juice of human kind'. 16

Kids: What are you doing?
Me: I'm just taking pictures.
Kids: Why?
Me: For myself. Just to see..
Kids: He must be a communist. He looks like one. Why don't you go over to the other side of town and watch the niggers play? 17

Clearly it was an image of America out of time with the wholesome years of post
war reconstruction. He was taken for a Communist on several occasions, not only because of his Swiss/German accent but because of his inexplicable interest in taking pictures of everyday life. An activity that often was understood as ‘suspicious behaviour’.

I refer to Frank, for his imagery is so remarkably alien to the world of America in the mid fifties as portrayed in the popular media. Its a long way from I Love Lucy or Leave it to Beaver, or indeed, the hopeful and buoyant feelings expressed in Steichen’s landmark photographic exhibition, The Family of Man (Fig. 46). This was an exhibition which toured the world and projected photography as a medium for optimistic and ‘heart warming’ human observation.

This is a very different kind of optimism from that seen in Steichen’s exhibition,...in which humanity was depicted as an integrated family.

Frank showed the disintegration of society, the isolation of man, but also the dignity and nobility in the face of despair. 18

For Robert Frank, his book The Americans was a realist series of photographs, documenting the unseen realities of a nation. They are strong images of Frank’s individual vision. Ironically, for an unaccepting America, they may as well have been works of fiction.

Robert Frank’s images are more accurately described as being one particular fiction, out of alignment with the popular fictions of the time.

So, what are the qualities and resonances of the landscape of the journals? It is landscape without people, but with evidence of civilisation, there are roads that dissect the dense growth of trees, there are cleared areas and mown fields. There are photographs that show specimens, such as rose petals and shells. As Kozloff says of Atget’s Paris, ‘one doesn’t know the priority of his indications: where to look first, what to regard most’. 19

I was concerned to create an Australian landscape. And indeed this continent is notable for its integration of introduced species with native flora. The original balance of two hundred years ago has been dramatically disturbed, especially along the eastern seaboard, and in many cases, irreversibly.
My landscape is, however, a sparsely populated place, as though it is very much more powerful than the few people that manage to cut a road through it or farm its open plains. This is not to say that it is inhospitable, rather, perhaps it is inaccessible, or unattractive for settlement. But this is all conjecture, for no clues to such details are given, or easily inferred from the work.

The importance of this place, its significance for the diarist, is something on which we are led to speculate. We are drawn to project on this neutral territory a structure of association, resonant with past experience and feeling. It is the same process we all engage in when understanding the places of our first memories.

This landscape is a 'real place' of great power for the diarist of the journals yet, it is for other observers, perhaps as remote and distant as looking at photographs from another person's childhood, like looking at a stranger's photo album.

There was, he admitted, a certain legal fiction which plainsmen were sometimes required to observe. But the boundaries of true nations were fixed in the souls of men. And according to the projections of real, that is spiritual, geography, the plains clearly did not coincide with any pretended land of Australia.
Notes.


10 Duane Michals, *Real Dreams*.
It is interesting to note that Michals has also illustrated a book of poems by C. P. Cavafy, writer of the poem ‘Ithaka’, which introduced the exhibition. I have yet to find a copy, as it has long since gone out of print.

11 Helen Ennis, op. cit., p. 10.

12 Isobel Crombie & Sandra Brown, *Twenty Contemporary Photographers from the Hallmark Card Collection*.

13 Crombie and Brown, op. cit., p. 36.


17 Robert Frank, *The lines of my hand*.


19 Max Kozloff, ‘Abandoned and Seductive: Atget's Streets’,

Gerald Murnane, op. cit., p. 37.
Chapter 7. Journey.

Most journeys begin less abruptly than they end, and to fix the true beginning of this one in either time or space is a task which I do not care to undertake. I find it easier to open my account of it at the moment when I first realised, with a small shock of pleasure and surprise, that it had actually begun. ¹

The exhibition, keeper of the secrets, was predominantly concerned to explore the theme of ‘journey’. This, with the themes of identity expressed within the material world and the nature of the ‘diary’ as a personal documentation of a life, form the major ‘vantage points’ from which to view the journals.

Journey as theme or metaphor is often bound up with male myth, a traditionally masculinist notion. ² The urbane and adventurous Peter Fleming, about to cross Asia, remarked with great fortitude that, despite a fifty percent compliment of women in his party, he was still able to keep his spirits up.

I found myself the leader of a party of four people who left Peking the night before with the undisclosed intention of proceeding overland to India. Apart from a rook rifle, six bottles of brandy, and Macaulay’s History of England we had no equipment or supplies worth mentioning. Two of us were women, and our only common language was Russian. I felt extremely cheerful, nevertheless. ³

Beat writer Jack Kerouac is a fine example of the man who just cuts loose and heads off on his own journey of self discovery. His book On The Road is clearly a period piece, reflecting a rebellion against the tight moral codes of the 1950’s. In fact, the book was not considered fit for publication till six years after it was finished, it is of interest for two reasons.
Firstly, it is an example of what Barbara Ehrenreich termed the American male's 'flight from commitment'. It is her view that the beats identified woman with restrictive, middle class values and aspirations.

Women and their demand for responsibility were, at worst, irritating and more often just uninteresting compared to the ecstatic possibilities of male adventure.  

In fact, for Kerouac, just about everything was secondary to the primacy of life on the road, which mostly involved having a wild time getting drunk, and of course, moving on quickly when the women he picked up along the way became too attached.

Secondly, On The Road is a fully blown escape from the everyday world work and relationships. On this trip Kerouac investigates his identity, searches his persona and is often reflective about the way the world goes on around him.

My diarist is by no means a latter-day beat. I mention Kerouac mainly because his style moves, in an arresting, deceptively naive manner, between an anecdotal record of his experiences and an exploration of his identity.

For all his coarse male bravado, Kerouac saw himself as a serious writer. As to his ultimate place within American literature I cannot judge. Not withstanding the critical comments of Ehrenreich, he created a highly idiosyncratic style, in fact quite romantic, and certainly, at its best, disarmingly intimate. All the more so for his use of a simple, repetitive and a rather limited vocabulary. In On The Road he is especially fond of adjectives like 'sad' and 'strange'.

Yet woven into this self-conscious naivety and minimalism he managed to express some moments of great intensity, delicately pursuing the nature of identity and its fragility.

I woke up as the sun was reddening; and that was the one distinct time in my life, the strangest moment of all, when I didn't know who I was --I was far from home, in a cheap hotel room I'd never seen, hearing the hiss of steam outside, and the creak of foot steps upstairs, and all the sad sounds, and I looked at the cracked ceiling and really 7. Journey.
didn't know who I was for about fifteen strange seconds, I wasn't scared; and my whole life was a haunted life, the life of a ghost. I was half way across America, at the dividing line between the East of my youth and the West of my future and maybe that's why it happened right there and then, that strange red afternoon. 5

The keeper of the secrets exhibition presented two series of images, one concerned with people travelling on the underground railway system and the other concerned with landscape. These two sections perhaps being more generally described as ‘transit’ and ‘location’.

More specifically the train series forms an important part of the journals.

But just then there wasn't a soul in sight around the yard office, it was mid of night, besides just then, as I woke up from a perfect dreamless sleep the highball was going baugh baugh up front and we were already pulling out, exactly like ghosts. 6

The train photographs have an unsettled and urgent quality. These people travel, in Kerouac’s words, like ‘ghosts’. They are anonymous and fugitive, mostly escaping from view before recognition can be made. The work is concerned with the motion of the trains and the way in which people become part of that movement.

Taking pictures in subways is anything but new. Both American photographer, Walker Evans, in the late forties, and Australian, John Williams (Fig. 47), in the seventies, were concerned to show individuals, recognisable faces, within the subterranean depths. Their work centred on the representation of people, documents of certain, perhaps unimportant, moments in the lives of real people, made significant by the visual acuity of the photographer.

My subjects are often without clear faces, presented primarily as figures, at some points partially abstracted representations of people. As stated earlier, this is not a document of the real world. It is a work of fiction. I am interested to explore the theme of identity within the material world as much in these images as I am in the still life photographs.
The representation of identity is addressed in Sophie Calle’s work, ‘Suite venitienne’ (Fig. 48). In the work she investigates the pursuit of a person she barely knows across Europe. She photographs from a distance, just keeping the subject in view. When he stops for the night, she finds a hotel room opposite his hotel, and photographs him from across the street, almost like a CIA operative, although the intent was considerably more benign.

The work is gentle and intriguing, having that deliberately unsatisfying sense of never catching the subject. He always slips away, always remains elusive and unexplained. We never discover the reason for his journey or, in fact, any details about him. He remains, through days of tracking and watching, essentially unknown beyond the engaging, but distanced documentary styled black and white photographs.

I photograph him one last time as he passes through the station gate. I will go no farther. He moves away, I lose sight of him. After these last thirteen days with him, our story comes to a close.

10:10 A.M. I stop following Henri B. 7

This work is also of relevance to the discussion as it highlights the contemporary interest in staging and theatre within photography. This fictional element is regarded by Isobel Crombie as an important feature of Post Modernist photographic approaches. 8

Jean Baudrillard sees in this work not the loss of the subject’s identity but, by contrast, the definition of the tracker.

You exist only in the trace of the other, but without his being aware of it; in fact, you follow your own tracks without knowing it yourself. Therefore, it is not to discover something about the other or where he’s heading. 9

This is also an interesting affirmation of the contemporary concern to place the photographer as of major importance. More traditional photographer’s work, such as that of Cartier-Bresson, see themselves as the hidden observer (Fig. 49),

Why have you never allowed yourself to be photographed?

In order to observe, one must be unobtrusive and able to pass by unnoticed. That is the only reason.  

In this view the photographer is hidden from the subject of the photograph, as well as being quite distanced from the viewer. Eugene Atget's photographs of Paris (Fig. 3), taken during the early twentieth century conveyed this empty quality. The work shows deserted streets, monuments and uninhabited parks. The images were a strong inspiration for the surrealists, Man Ray was a friend.

Max Kelly's work, *Faces of the Street, William Street Sydney 1916*, is micro-history of a major Sydney street, based on a series of council photographs taken between the tenth and nineteenth of June, 1916. Kelly lovingly writes his history of the pawnbrokers, traders and residents. It is a rich and evocative publication; yet the photographer/s are unnamed and unknown (Fig. 50).

My work presents the diarist as an ambiguous presence, sometimes at the centre of attention, sometimes fugitive and remote. In many ways this mirrors the themes of the journey as a metaphor, for example, partial or complete dissolution of identity,

> Alone, I was at once vulnerable and more sensitised, and even China appeared no longer precisely a strange land. I was just a stranger in it, my identity thinned. 

This dissolution of identity is often an interlude or preparation for the triumphant resolution at the conclusion. It can be a sign of rigours that are being endured along the way to the end of the journey. Lewis Carroll plays with the conventions of the journey in his extraordinary *Alice in Wonderland* (Fig. 51), where Alice literally shrinks. Something the ever assertive Alice greatly resents,

> ‘Well, I should like to be a little larger, Sir, if you wouldn’t mind’, said Alice: ‘three inches is such a wretched height to be’.  
> ‘It is a very good height indeed!’ said the Caterpillar angrily, rearing itself upright as it spoke (it was exactly three inches high).
It is extraordinary to consider the power that H.G.Wells imbued into the sci-fi horror of *The Invisible Man*. Tied to this most basic loss of identity, 'the man' became invisible to the human eye, was a whole range of truly ghastly personality traits. The invisible man was mean, bitter and vengeful. He maliciously hurt strangers and delighted in his manipulation of them. For all his aggressively anti-social behaviour scant explanation is given for this malevolence except of course, his hideous invisibility.

They were prepared for scars, disfigurements, tangible horrors but *nothing!* The bandages and false hair flew across the passage of the bar, making a hobbdehoy jump to avoid them. For the man who stood there shouting some incoherent explanation, was a solid gesticulating figure up to the coat-collar of him, and then- nothingness, no visible thing at all! 14

For the astral traveller the path to understanding involves nothing less than a complete departure from the temporal body. A process often associated with the disorientation of self, deep spiritual mysteries and possible return difficulties for the cavalier novice. As with Darwin's warnings, the Swami states his case for caution strongly (Fig. 52), although we are left in some doubt as to the specific nature of the 'very undesirable results'.

I do not deem it advisable to enter into a description of the technical details of passing out of the physical body into the astral body of finer substance. Any description of the facts, might give an untrained person at least a hint of the process, which might lead him to experiment, and which might bring upon him very undesirable results. 15

So what are the particular qualities of my diarist for this series? He/she is fugitive and reserved, we are not given any great insight to the reason for photographing the underground. The images are distanced in the sense that the subjects are as much strangers to the diarist, as they are for the viewer. I should stress that this is the quality of the train series, and not necessarily the tone for the whole submission.

The images have something of the quality of Robbe-Grillet's *In the corridors of*...
There are five bodies, occupying three or four adjacent steps, on the left side of the stairs, more or less close to the handrail, which moves along - it also - sharing the same movement now made even less perceptible, even more doubtful, by the form of the handrail, a simple, thick ribbon of black rubber, with an unbroken surface, with two straight edges, on which no identifiable mark allows its speed to be determined, except for the two hands resting on it, about a yard apart, toward the bottom of the narrow, slanting band which everywhere else seems stationary, two hands moving upward regularly, without a jerk, synchronously with the whole system.

In this overwhelmingly detailed piece Robbe-Grillet conveys the way in which people blend into their environment, 'synchronously with the system'. They are people yet they merge with the movement of the escalator or the train. The train series was concerned to visually express this merging, this process whereby the human traffic of the railway becomes part of the 'whole system'.

Now, in this observation about viewpoint it is important to state clearly, that I am concerned mainly with the literal fact of the photographer's viewpoint. The photographer is stationary in relation to the people and the trains.

An obvious remark perhaps, yet it is one of the most ignored features of taking and viewing photographs. The images are influenced by where you stand, how high you stand and where you hold the camera in a way that other visual recording methods are not. Painters are usually 'educated' to see perspective. The photographer always shoots with an 'accurate' perspective, for the lens is arbiter of the light falling on the film. Of course the notion of a 'true perspective', in a philosophical sense, is a nonsense. I refer rather to the simple geometry of the image.

I make this point for it informs the whole discussion about the subjects of the images becoming part of the movement of the train. They appear so because the diarist is standing back, fixed to the platform, she/he is not part of the crowd. She/he is at a distance, observing and removed from the flow of traffic. They appear to move in blurred, softened images, for she/he is still.
So, to the journey's end. It is often a place to receive peace and wisdom, rewards for the dangers encountered and the rigours endured. Or perhaps, quite simply, it is a place to sum up the situation, to review the things, so far.

For Charles Darwin, there were hardships to be endured and privations to withstand, made possible only in the knowledge that at some sweet point, in the future, the journey would be completed.

Darwin was, it seems something of a reluctant traveller. Despite the enormous pleasure and excitement he found in discovering 'new worlds', he found the voyages exhausting. He strongly recommended, in his popular publication, The Voyage of the Beagle, that such journeys not be undertaken by the frivolous or the light hearted for

Many of the losses which must be experienced are obvious; such as that of the society of every old friend, and the sight of those places with which every dearest remembrance is so intimately connected. These losses, however are at the time partly relieved by the exhaustless delight of anticipating the long wished for day of return. 17.

Ironically, Gulliver disavows any judgement of the meaning of his adventures.

I shall say nothing of those remote nations where Yahoos preside, amongst which the least corrupted are the Brobdingnagians, whose wise maxims in morality and government it would be our happiness to observe. But I forbear descanting further, and rather leave the judicious reader to his own remarks and applications. 18

The erudite and elegant Samuel Johnson, on returning from the Hebrides, found an uncharacteristic humility, 'I cannot but be conscious that my thoughts on national manners, are the thoughts of one who has seen but little.' 19 Helene Hanff, at the end of her trans-Atlantic relationship by correspondence, was left with a sense of unreality, 'None of it happened, none of it was real. Even the people weren't real. It was all imagined, they were all phantoms'. 20

More prosaically John Williams saw the end of his journey as the end of his
patience; he had just had enough. Trailing across America, talking to writers of detective fiction had led him to New York. He defines himself as alien to the country, an Englishman, finished with the evils of the Big Apple and ready to return home.

And at this point I begin to feel, not afraid precisely, but sick maybe. Sick of all the baseball caps that say, ‘Shit happens’ and of the gun shops and the sex shops and the bad beer and sick really of all the evil that people do, all the viciousness, and sick at last of being fascinated by it and worst, of seeing bad things not as bad but as research, as material.

And that's when I knew it was time to go home. 21

Fankenstein's creature, near the end of his flight from civilisation views the impassive, lifeless body of his creator, and finds peace. This 'monster', made from an assemblage of lifeless body parts, reveals his true nature to be human, broken with guilt and regret. This creature, contrary to Frankenstein's judgement, is not the embodiment of evil. Rather, he shows the essential wholeness of the human psyche, in which good and evil exist together.

I shall die, and what I now feel be no longer felt. Soon these burning miseries will be extinct. I shall ascend my funeral pile triumphantly and exult in the agony of the torturing flames. The light of that conflagration will fade away; my ashes will be swept into the sea by the winds. My spirit will sleep in peace, or if it thinks, it will not surely think thus. Farewell. 22

This powerful image provided a model for legions of soft hearted monsters to come. The android in Ridley Scott's astounding science fiction film, Blade Runner, at the end of his preprogrammed short life, snatches his executioner from death. In a powerful scene of Gothic horror the android dies slowly, speaking of the sweetness of life and of the poetic beauty of experience, his humanoid face glazed with rain. 23

In Malouf's delicately drawn novel, An Imaginary Life, the poet Ovid escapes from exile. His companion, the 'wild child', finds freedom at the end of their flight from captivity. Ovid, however, is led to the 'point on the earth's surface
where I disappear’. 24 It a moment of insight and resolution.

It is not as I had imagined it. There are no wolves. It is clear sunlight, at
the end of a day like each of the others we have spent out here. 25

To call him back would be to miss the fulness of this moment as it is
about to be revealed, and I want so much, at the very end here, to be
open to all that it holds for me. 26

After crossing the fire and horror of the Inferno, rising through Purgatory, at
last, Dante reaches Paradise.

The Primal Light the whole irradiates,
   And is received therein as many ways
   as there are splendours wherewithal it mates.
Since, then, affection waits upon the gaze
   And its intensity, diversely bright
   Therein the sweets of love now glow, now blaze. 27

In Jean Rhys’ novel, Voyage in the Dark, Anna’s travels end with her just
hanging onto life, ravaged by illness and the dreadful experiences of her move to
London, yet hopeful of beginning again. The real prospects are thin, the journey
has taken its toll. This book is about the fact of survival.

When the voices stopped the ray of light came in again under the door like
the last thrust of remembering before everything is blotted out. I lay
and watched it and thought about starting all over again. 28

As Jane Miller eloquently writes

Jean Rhys developed a lucid and inward style to stand for the outsider’s
experience, the watchful and distrustful onlooker of a world
systematically organised to take advantage of her and people like her.
Her heroines never win in the world, but their clear-sightness, their wit
and their capacity to live in their own heads make for a limited kind of
triumph. 29
For Cavafy, the public servant and poet, whose journeys away from his home in Alexandria were few and unadventurous, the real journey was one of more sensual, introspective and spiritual dimensions. His poems were never quite complete, existing in stacks of versions around his home, as over the years he returned to rewrite them, yet once again. For him, arriving at journey's end was of little consequence. The journey itself was the experience,

*Keep Ithaka in your mind.*

Arriving there is what you're destined for.

But don't hurry the journey at all.

Better it lasts years,

so you're old by the time you reach the island, wealthy with all you're gained on the way,

not expecting Ithaka to make you rich.
Notes.


2. This is something of a truism when one considers the long tradition of tales of male adventure that run, in a more or less, direct line from works such as Virgil's *Aeneid*.


9. Calle and Baudrillard, op. cit., p. 76.


21 John Williams, *Into the Badlands*. 

22 Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*. 
first published in 1818, introduction by Maurice Hindle 

23 *Blade Runner*, Dir., Ridley Scott, With Harrison Ford. The Ladd Company/ 

24 David Malouf, *An Imaginary Life*. 

25 Malouf, op. cit., p. 150.

26 Malouf, op. cit., p. 152.

27 Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy, Paradiso*. 
Translated by Dorothy L. Sayers and Barbara Reynolds, 

28 Jean Rhys, *Voyage in the Dark*, first published in 1934, 

29 Jane Miller, *Women Writing on Women*. 

30 C. P. Cavafy, from the poem 'Ithaka', *C.P. Cavafy: Collected Poems*. 
8. Exhibition Documentation.

Exhibitions

flight without wings.

keeper of the secrets

Additional showing of work, not directly related to the DCA.
Sense of place. (Group show)

Papers.

'The Ins and Outs of Eddie Avenue: Astral Traveller'.
Post Graduate Seminar, June 1989.
School of Creative Arts,
University of Wollongong

'Domestic Landscapes: Photographing the ordinary world'.
Post Graduate Seminar, August, 1991.
School of Creative Arts
University of Wollongong

Copies of these papers have been submitted to my supervisors. I have not included them in this submission as much of the research has been incorporated into this document.
flight without wings

February 1989.
Disposals Artspace.
Fitzmaurice Street,
Wagga Wagga, NSW.

The exhibition contained twenty images, mounted and framed, image size 24cm/24cm. All black and white photographs.

Two main areas of subject matter were shown, the domestic series and the first trains series. These, with additional material shot since have formed the basis of the visual material used in Part One, stranger's kiss, Part Three, fluorescent light fills the room and Part Four, no edge where my skin met with the water.

The exhibition explored the notion of travelling over objects and through spaces, rather like the experience of astral travel. As well, the theme of Jamais Vu was considered. That is, familiar objects and people becoming unfamiliar, as though they were new.

Technically the exhibition was an opportunity to look at the quality of the photographic paper, Agfa Record Rapid, partially selenium toned. The results seemed satisfactory, although there was some difficulty in obtaining consistent image colour with the selenium toner. (A factor influenced by the chemical structure of the paper. Over toning produced an unpleasant split tone that was undesirable for this project).

As well, the train photographs were enlarged to match the size and square format of the other images. This concept was later abandoned and, as can be seen in the journals, the image size now varies from rectangular, to square, according to the film size used. Since that exhibition I have considered that there is no problem with mixing the formats.

I enclose a brief report from the director of the gallery, invitation and review details. The exhibition was attended by both supervisors.
Review Details, Invitation.

Review.
Geoff Gordon, 'Exhibition: A Flight Without Wings'.
Art In Form March 1989, pp. 7/8.

DISPOSALS
invites you to the opening of

**a flight without wings**
photographs by John Storey

Saturday, 25th February, 6:30 pm

Exhibition dates: 26 Feb to 18 March.  Gallery hours: 11.00 - 5.00, Thurs. to Sun.
DISPOSALS ARTSPACE 116 Fitzmaurice Street, Wagga Wagga, NSW Australia
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Disposals Art space was very pleased to host an exhibition of photographs by John Storey in February 1989.

The exhibition titled "Flight Without Wings" was one of our most successful shows for the year, and attracted a great deal of interest from our clientele. The preview was well attended by members of the public, as well as academic staff from the School of Visual and Performing Arts at Riverina Murray Institute of Higher Education.

The body of work displayed a very personal and sensitive vision, as well as a visual unity. The short written piece featured with the photographs contributed to the evocative and slightly mysterious nature of the exhibition as a whole.

We look forward to seeing more work by this very talented artist.

Yours sincerely,

Terri Hall
Director, Disposals Art Space
**keeper of the secrets**

October 1991
Long Gallery, School of Creative Arts,
University of Wollongong,
Wollongong, NSW.

This exhibition contained twenty four images, mounted and framed, 25cm/18cm. All black and white photographs.

Two distinct areas were shown, landscape and the more recent of the train photographs. These, with additional material, have formed the basis for Part Two, *flight without wings* and Part Five, *keeper of the secrets*.

The exhibition was concerned to explore the notion of created landscapes. Both the natural landscape and the underground series were compilations of images from Adelaide, Sydney, Melbourne, Wilson’s Promontory and Wagga. They were presented as cohesive environments, although careful investigation would have shown the discrepancies. I was not interested in setting up a tedious riddle for the viewer to unravel, rather a gentle deceit. These were intended as fictional landscapes.

Technically the photographs were all 35 mm, shot on T Max 3200 film, which produces a coarse grained image and offers high sensitivity. The film was chosen for both those characteristics, and was printed to enhance the granular structure of the image. T MAX 3200 produces a richer tone range than other film stock in this speed group. Paper stock was the same as the *flight without wings* exhibition.

The completed exhibition has been viewed by both the supervisors, although neither was able to attend the exhibition. The entire show was offered to the University of Wollongong. It has been accepted for inclusion in the permanent collection and is on show in the University Library.
Installation photograph of the exhibition *keeper of the secrets*, Long Gallery, University of Wollongong.

The ceramic sculpture in the centre of the frame is by joint exhibitor, Sue Jorgenson.
Installation photograph of the exhibition *keeper of the secrets*,
University Library, Permanent Collection,
University of Wollongong.
Sense of place.

Lighthouse.
5 Little Chapel Street,
Prahran.

I have included this for the record, however it was not regarded as part of my formal assessment. This was a group show of drawings and photographs. Michael Wennrich, photography. Gus Van Der Heyde, drawing.

The train series was re-edited and presented as a suite of seven prints.

Installation photograph.

Angel Wings.

My father used to bet on a track here. He'd get on the phone to his SP and place a few country bets, mind you he hated the country. 'Good spot to win a few bob, but a pain in the neck to live there', that was his attitude to the country. Do they still run horses up here, on the old track?

Elise ran her hand across the cool vinyl of the taxi seat as she spoke. It was easy conversation, ten minutes of chat to fill in the ride from airport to town.

Oh yes, my good lady. It's still one of the biggest country tracks. In fact my brother and I used to race here, we had this squibby little horse, called Angel Wings.

Angel Wings, what a pretty name. Dad always liked a good name.

It was my wife's job, finding the names, anyway we had a crazy time, with this squibby little horse. You see we had a problem with the jockey, he'd been paid to pull her up, so that Laughing Lad, at longer than believable odds, could romp in, real scam it was, absolutely criminal.

The air was cold, clean, a little damp. The driver was somewhere, buried deep within a tired tweed coat. His face was a scrap of rosy skin, between his turned collar, and his small soft cap. As he talked to Elise he kept his eyes firmly on the road, both hands attached to the wheel, like he was racing. The car travelled at the exact speed limit.

But we had heard all about it, on the old bush 'phone-box. So, we did an off-set, with a wager on Laughing Lad of course, in the same race. Charles, my
brother, placed a bit of 'safe as' money. He always puts out an off-set wager with some ropey old dog at Dapto.

Elise had left her city in the dark. Another taxi driver, who said nothing to her, had driven one handed through the dense, built environment. At one point, she had felt the car slip a little to the side, as they hit the wet tram tracks. The driver had pulled them back, with the tiniest movement of the wheel. It was mid-winter. The airport was dusted in frost, an icing sugar of chill.

__ So this jockey, little squirt, thought we were real fools. But we planned to win both ways. If Angel Wings won outright, we'd make about a grand. But if he did pull her up, we'd still cop about six hundred, or more, if the odds went right with the SP. Not to mention the dog.

__ Always hated the dogs myself.

__ Yep. Always lose quids on the dogs.

The sunlight was low, early morning winter light, still yellow from the late dawn. At the edge of town the motels started, people were loading their cars, letting their engines warm up. Lines of motel rooms, with smoking cars in front of them and shuffling strangers, reluctantly saying to each other 'Good morning.'

Elise became distracted by these small signs of activity. Then she turned back to the driver, to stay with the conversation.

__ Did you win?

__ Oh yes, good lady, oh yes, but not as we had expected. You see, he pulled her up real tight and old Angel Wings went for a Burton, seventh place, a shocking spot to be, and we thought oh Lord at least we still have Laughing Lad to bring in a few quid.

__ You've got to have the nerve to be a punter, my father loved it, every Saturday on the phone to his SP.

9. Swimming with sharks. 'Angel wings.'
— Oh indeed, well you know the game. Anyway the best part of it all was the old mangy terrier in Dapto. This dog got a spurt on and came in first. Total recovered being eleven hundred. Needless to say we had great pleasure in telling the jockey that his services were no longer required.

— Bet you didn't put it so politely.

— Let's say he got the drift fairly smartly.

They both laughed.

The town began abruptly with a line of dirty factory buildings. There were car repair shops, panel beaters and muffler replacements. Apprentices in overalls were crouched in the cold, looking under cars, lifting bonnets and reaching around the hot engines. Their fingers were burnt in lines of pink blisters, or chilled blue, at the knuckles.

— We had to sell the nag the following year.

— My God it's like another world out here.

— Long way from Melbourne, eh, I have not been down there for years, and frankly I don't expect to make it again.

— What about the cup?

— Oh no. I'd rather catch it at the TAB. Now where exactly were you off to.

— I'm going up the College later, but at the moment, I wonder if you know a pleasant coffee lounge, a friend of mine told me to go some place called 'The Gladestone' I just need to wait there for an hour or so.

— Well, The Gladestone is beautiful, cost nearly three quarters of a mil, you can just sit in the coffee shop there, enjoy the morning sunshine, a very Melbourne atmosphere, I'm sure. No problems getting a Taxi up to the college, when you're ready.

9. Swimming with sharks. 'Angel wings.'
Elise sat at the white tablecloth. There were a few business people and several old couples. They were eating cakes, or toast and scrambled eggs. These plates of food were as overdressed as the building itself. Folded serviettes and neatly arranged cutlery competed with the sprigs of parsley and twists of orange for the attention of guests. She had coffee and a warm Danish pastry.

So strange, she thought. This small country town was like another planet, not dramatically different, but nonetheless altered. As a child she had run around the backyard with her younger brother, Simon, playing spooky space games. Standing in the gritty dust of the chook yard, calling out to Simon, who stood high on the galvanised roof of the hen house, 'Beam me up Scotty, beam me up', as her father's bantams pecked furtively at her bare feet.

When they went shopping with Mum Simon loved to draw Elise aside, point to some dreamy group of pensioners and whisper, 'those innocent shoppers are yet to understand that they are entering the Twilight Zone, little realising that their experience in Coles New World would change their lives...forever'. Often this led to outbursts of snickers and giggles. It drove their mother crazy with exasperation. She never knew when her kids were going to turn into uncooperative 'little buggers'.

At The Gladestone Elise had planned to go over her notes for the interview, but instead, she spent the time absorbing this alien's planet, eating their food and observing the very detail of their existence.

She had travelled all morning only to find herself in some drab, outer suburb. A bland, cold suburb to a city that never existed. She had entered the 'Twilight Zone'. The weave of the table cloth and the coarse line of metal at the edge of the spoon, where it had been poorly finished, confirmed it all. The squibby little horse, Angel Wings, and the clean feel of the Taxi seat, seemed more interesting to her than the interview. She made a note in her diary, 'Post card for Simon, from Planet Bland, somewhere in deep space'.

Well I don't know much about the English Department, I'm in Drama, we are on different parts of the campus, it's huge you know, the poor Asians can't believe it, imagine coming from Hong Kong to this place.

9. Swimming with sharks. 'Angel wings.'
The waiter was a media student at the College, and over the hour, passed on all sorts of details about the place. Elise drew from him a string of unreliable gossipy bits. She was fascinated, and encouraged him in this conspiracy. He was bored with waiting, Elise was in need of some markers as to where she was, what was this town like.

— Good luck with your job interview. I must say, though, the one you have sounds better to me.

At ten she paid my bill and the waiter called a cab.

— What part of the college, please.

— The Personnel Section. Here, I have a map, it's been marked.

— That's OK I know where we are off to, Building 50, on the other side.

Buildings 50 to 54 were scattered across the empty hillside. Mostly they were in brick, heavy and rough, a deep bruised brown against the dirty green of the winter grass. Elise was met at Personnel by Kate. She was a friend from University days and had encouraged Elise to apply for this job of English Lecturer, at this small, regional University.

— Well hi, you made it. Come in, I'll have to leave you but Tracy will look after you. There's four to be done today. You are first, so I'll be tied up till twelveish. So when you are finished Trace will get you a cab, or you can look around the campus, then we could meet for lunch at the wine bar.

— You don't think that looks like favouritism?

— Hell no, all the others are going to have lunch at the staff club, it'll be all over by then, Christ you probably have a case for being disadvantaged.

— OK. The wine bar.

So Elise was taken by Tracy to wait in the office foyer. The room was as plain as a suburban doctor's surgery. There were no houses outside the window. She

9. Swimming with sharks. 'Angel wings.'
could only see empty hillsides covered in scruffy fences that dissected the land in awkward, messy patterns. More evidence, she mused, of the strangeness of this place.

___ Coffee or tea. Don't be nervous, it'll be fine you're a friend of Kate's?

___ Yes I've known her forever. I'll have tea please.

___ Yep, now Kate said you were off to the wine bar so I'll organise a cab or a map, don't worry, anyway there's only one wine bar, so you won't get lost. Frankly, you're lucky to escape the staff club, food's ghastly, the Director's a dag.

___ Thanks, thank you.

Elise tried again to concentrate on her notes, but the chair was quite uncomfortable. The view out the window seemed more interesting. She could feel a sensitive section of skin on her scalp. There was nothing to see, but she could feel a stinging area about the size of a large coin, somewhere above her right ear. It came and went, but this time it had lasted all morning.

During the interview she had wanted to run her hands deep into her hair, scratch the burning skin but instead, she had to sit and answer questions, remain composed, professional. It was a room full of observers, watching her, taking anthropological notes and asking trick questions. Elise was performing, measuring each answer, at all times aware of her voice. She was careful to speak clearly, but not in a strained way. It's a balance, she had practiced it for years, answers always to the point, clear and a little sharp, if needed. Elise knew it was important not to be bullied.

At one stage she crossed her arms, out of habit. She felt the shape of her breast. She had to push back the thought that snapped into view. All of them, as naked people, casually sitting about this beige room, rounded, well fed bodies, with hair and aromas, moist against the institutional synthetic of the furniture. She could see the line of pink blush running along their lower spines, where their buttocks were pushed tightly together.

9. Swimming with sharks. 'Angel wings.'
She saw the creased material at the Director's underarm and wondered if it was moist. Beneath his shirt, for the men had taken off their jackets, she could see the outline of a singlet, the roundness of his breasts held by the white cotton of the cloth.

Elise pushed it all back, all the distracting fantasies that flooded her mind. They were a block to the job in hand. She came back to the interview. In answering a difficult question on curriculum she was beamed back to the beige room of neatly dressed adults.

It all lasted twenty minutes. Then she asked her usual closing question. Elise had read about it in an American paperback on 'winning the interview race and writing the powerful C.V.'

__ Is there anything, within my presentation, that the committee feels will make my application unsuitable?

They were stumped at the directness of the question and declined further comment. She liked to leave on that note.

Elise took a taxi and arrived at the wine bar early. The town aliens were filling the place for lunch. Kate arrived exactly on time.

__ Well you went very well, they will make an offer.

__ What about the others?

__ Lovely, but they didn't have the right stuff. The Director thought you were a person of great charm, and intelligence, bit haughty, but they put it down to nerves. You were clever not go on about how much you like the place. He really hates crawlers, drives him nuts. No, it was a class act, you knocked them out.

__ Christ.

__ Well you are going to take it. You know it's not in my hands, I'm just one voice, and I wouldn't push you if there was a much more appropriate candidate,
you know that, we agreed on that when I told you I'd be there. It's legit Elise, they just loved you.

Never thought they'd ask. I felt sick in the waiting room, the money they'd spent on getting me here when I had no intention of taking the job. I nearly told Tracy to change my flight, I was contemplating doing a runner.

Lovely, I love it. They spent a lousy hundred and fifty bucks on you, I'm paying for lunch at the best place in town and you get an attack of the guilt. Wish I never told you the job was going. Christ, he must have done a job on you when you left him. Old Ben really pulled out the emotional blackmail, have a drink.

Kate, I'm talking about the job. Anyway, Ben's cooling out, we'll talk next week, maybe. Look he will just have to face it, I won't go back. I don't hate him, Christ we spent years together. He's very cute, but not for me, he's lost some pride in himself, or something. He clings to me. But all of that, does not mean I need a job in outer space.

I know. Sorry to bring it up. I just thought you'd like to see up here, see the place, have lunch with an old pal. I don't ask for thanks, and I don't want to pry into what you and shitface are up to.

They laughed. Kate took a cigarette from her bag and handed the packet to Elise.

I've given up.

Last time I saw you it was the other way around. Anyway you can't leave the Ben problem alone, can you, always after the next bit of gos'. Where's Sophie, I was looking forward to seeing her.

Well, today's a nightmare for her, she sends her love.

Kate ordered cheese plates and a bottle of expensive white wine. The bar got noisier, but Elise didn't mind, it was somewhere to hide. They had coffee.

Swimming with sharks. 'Angel wings.'
It's not a bad place to work you know, I mean it's fine for an unmarried woman. Soph loves it. I love it, we're out all the time, strange, but I've really gone off the city. I do more here, and next year Soph and I are off to Italy and France, professional leave. Soph’s got time off. Anyway, that's bit off the point, the Director wants to hand you the letter himself, it's his style.

Christ, I feel sick at the thought of it.

Bullshit, come on. It will only be two minutes. The Director loves to have an offer banged off the IBM, and handed out on the same day. He'll be there at two, then he's doing the Sociology interviews. Don't breathe on him. Mind you, by now he'll be knocking back the last of the Wolf Blass.

It was, as Kate said, a casual, very brief meeting. The Director was a short plump man, with thinning black hair. He was charming, and, as Elise had realised in the interview, gifted with a cunning intelligence. The letter was passed over to her in the Dean's office, hidden within the Humanities building. The room was plain, except for a large oil painting of a swimming pool.

When it was concluded, Elise was surprised to find that Tracy had already organised her escape, another country cab to the airport. She walked into the brittle sunlight and thought 'Beam me up Scotty, Beam up'.

At the airport she sat in the unyielding transit lounge chair. There was a view across the tarmac to the countryside, more vacant brown hills and huge skies, blocked in with solid colour. Somewhere above the radar tower she saw a flash of metal in the sky, like a UFO sighting, she was not quite sure what it was, or if she had even seen it. Then a few minutes later, the shape of an Ansett jet became more visible, a silver cigar shape against the Prussian blue sky.

On the plane Elise had a window seat, so she sat down and closed her eyes. In the darkness around her she could hear the restless shuffle of people entering, finding their seats, stuffing their things into the overhead lockers. Then the.
engines got louder and the plane made a wobbling movement. The airline staff prepared everyone for crashing, firstly on land, then at sea,

... and underneath the seat you will find, close at hand, a life jacket,...

But Elise had slipped away, passed through the ether like a radio wave. She had finally finished building her wall of sleep, a high wall, too high to climb, a resilient wall of calm. A force field to keep the aliens out.
Fluorescent light fills the room.

Fluorescent light fills the room, it is a cool light, smooth and shadowless it softens the benches that line this room. It is a room where people usually wait to hear news, sometimes the news is a long time in coming. Today the room has one person in it.

The scent of floor polish in this room is quite mild, almost not there, but just insistent enough to make it's presence felt. Outside it is a warm day but in here it is normally a steady temperature, usually around twenty degrees. If there is a backup of hot air in the ventilation system an invisible sludge of sweaty heat seeps lethargically from the vents in the ceiling.

The man in this room is waiting to hear news of a person who was involved in an accident. He is waiting to hear what the X-rays will say. He is waiting alone because the other people, who will arrive soon, have only just been notified. The injured person has dark hair and is handsome. He is of medium height and slight build, in the way that boys of nineteen often are. (If they are heavy and strong, they are sometimes called young men). The man waiting is both saddened and deeply shocked by the events of this day. He is the boy's employer, that is their formal relationship.

This boy was knocked down by a motorist who failed to see him step out onto the roadway, but nobody really knows who is to blame. This man is sad because his mind is racing with mad, crazy thoughts of paraplegia, states of coma, haemorrhage, mutilation and concussion. He thinks the boy may be paralysed from the waist down this is his worst fear but strangely he has no real reason to believe this. In fact he has been advised by a doctor that "everything should be fine, fingers crossed, he will be fine, there is a lot of shock with this sort of
thing, but he is strong and young and I have found no indicators to worry me. But he must rest quietly for a little while, just wait here please because he will be fine”.

The nurse is saying, “the X-rays are routine, to check for small breaks and hairline fractures. You heard the doctor, he’s fine, he’s just a bit shocked but he’ll be fine”. But he knows that doctors often tell lies and that they tell these lies with effortless ease. So he is now waiting to hear his news, waiting to be joined by the boy’s parents who will want to know all the details of this news, the news that is yet to come.

For this man it is all so shocking and sad he feels the skin pull tight across his forehead. He is thinking about the boy’s forearms, thin and fine. He wonders if the boy has ever been with a girl or if he will ever marry. These thoughts obsess him now.

He is thinking about the boy’s forearms. They are so thin, so delicate. This morning he watched the boy writing out a list of appointments, his fine, long arms moving over the desk top. He noticed the creamy colour of the boy’s olive skin against the bleached white of the paper. The pen made a thin scratching sound from time to time, the boy did not look up. His thin wrist was circled by a black leather watch band that was not quite tight, so the watch slipped a little to the side. His shoulders were enclosed in a clean white shirt, the boy is always well dressed and the shirt was expensive and stylish, pure cotton with a simple collar. The shirt made the boy’s skin seem rich and smooth, against the white paper his arms were delicate and fine. The man liked to remember the way these arms looked as they rested on the white pages of paper.

He liked the boy’s forearms and he liked watching them move. He knew that this was a secret pleasure, a silent, harmless pleasure, hidden and sealed into the routine of his working day. He never let the meaning of it invade any other part of his life.

Now in this shadowless room, intense with cool light, he is waiting to hear his news. So this man puts his hands together on his lap.

9. Swimming with sharks. ‘Fluorescent light fills the room.’
He is waiting. He is remembering that the boy has a slight build for a nineteen year old. He remembers saying this to his wife. "Nothing to the tiny little guy; little wacker, little sparrow of a kid, just a breeze and he'd be gone."

He is thinking, as he is waiting, that the boy has long thin arms that move effortlessly, like this morning, when he was writing at the desk. This morning the boy looked fresh, the man had enjoyed watching him, and now he enjoyed remembering the way those fine delicate arms moved over the table top. No-one knew that he had been watching, and no-one knew now he was remembering.

"There will be only a short time to wait," he has been told by the Nurse. So he is holding his concern in control. After all, he is not a doctor, all these thoughts of wheel chairs and lifeless limbs are pure supposition, morbid and morose, they are nothing more than fantasy. But doctors do tell lies, that much he knows. The nurse did say that the X-ray was routine, but that may be a lie, with the boy looking so ill perhaps they had thought a lie would hold him sweet, hold him till the real facts are known and the real news is presented.

Perhaps, he thinks, these doctors are waiting for the real parents to arrive. His relationship to the boy is formal, fond and fatherly, but formal. It is always important to keep that distance with an employee, always important to keep that distance with a young employee, important always to watch your step with young men, always important to watch those fine arms on the desk at a fond but formal distance. It is the distance that is critical.

He is waiting and controlling his fears. So he just looks at his hands and thinks about the boy's delicate arms, as they were this morning. Although he is the only one in the room, it is so light and so empty he feels conspicuous. In fact he can see himself sitting in the room. A man at the end of the bench, his hands together and his face looking downwards.

He can see that he is a neat man. He can see that his shoes are very clean and that his grey woollen socks are pulled up so tight the flesh of his legs is visible through the knitted ribs of the material. He can see himself as a large man in a small room that is empty with the skin on his forehead quite clearly smooth with tension. He can see that he is absolutely still, and he can see the boy's forearms resting against the pages on the desk.
The door opens, he sees himself talking to a doctor, a woman in her fifties who wears half glasses. She is smiling and talking slowly. She is saying, "everything has gone just as we hoped, just as we cautiously predicted, the boy is fine. He may have been really hurt but he is fine now and resting. I would have come to see you earlier but I was called away to another accident and I did so want to assure you myself that he will be fine, he is young and strong and he will be a fine young man". He is trying to listen to her, lip reading and trying to remember what the exact words are so that he can check over them later. She leaves him.

A tall minister from the Uniting Church is saying what a great day it is, "so warm and clear, so very beautiful to be alive this day, if just to see this blue sky and taste the freshness of this day". He notices that the minister does not smile as much as the doctor, which he prefers.

Still, he is smiling as he answers affably in jerky spurts of words that cross the room. "Beautiful weather...unusual weather...yes...yes...not by a long shot no...bit of a turn up...lots of azaleas in that neck of the woods...yes I know...but we can't grow them,...yes, I am O K...good...bit of a worry there for a while...but everything is fine...that's what the doctor said just then...everything is fine."

There is a busy feel to the conversation with each of them overlapping their replies, starting to speak just before the other finishes. Then he can see himself agreeing to talk for a while longer—which is not at all what he wants to do.

This man's grandmother hated ministers and he remembers her sitting at home, being charming to the Anglican minister and then saying he was a "silly bugger" when he had left. Despite the fact that the man does not pray he agrees to join the minister in prayer. There had been no pressure to do so but the man distinctly heard himself say yes.
They are praying, but the minister is doing all the talking while the man is thinking about the boy's forearms and the way they move when he writes at the desk. The man is thinking about the colour of skin against the bleached white of a page. The minister is talking confidentially, conspiratorially with his unseen God, negotiating, interceding, showing by example the power of his faith, the depth of his love. It is an elegant exposition of the spiritual life. The man is listening to these calm words, he can see himself listening, head bowed in prayer. He is listening to the prayer, which is very peaceful, which makes him feel peaceful while he is remembering the boy's arms, the look of the boy's fine arms resting on a piece of fresh white paper.

9. Swimming with sharks. 'Fluorescent light fills the room.'
French in the afternoon.

The note on Mrs Spike's front door said,

Would the children who stole my teaspoons please return them. I have notified the Police.

Mrs Spike often forgot that I came on a Tuesday for French lessons. Although, when this happened, neither of us let on. If she was late, as she was on this day, I waited till she arrived, and then we just went inside and began the afternoon's session. Just as if nothing unusual had happened.

In the long pause between my arrival, and her arrival, I slipped into a tired, dreamy state, slowly letting my eyes roam over the front yard of the house. The buffalo grass grew in tightly packed bundles, sharp and spiky, ready to repel the bared flesh of anyone who attempted to lie down and enjoy the heavy warmth of the humid afternoon.

My eyes moved over the lawn and the bricks of the front fence, they had a particular liverish darkness to them. I was mainly interested in the splinters of spiky grass.

I was just filming, which was for me, a refined sort of dreaming. I would walk through a room shooting continuously, in my mind I was putting together wide angles with close ups, I created cut away shots to the next room, flashbacks and slow motion sequences, anything that was crucial to the narrative. This internal film was the serialised epic of my life, always wide screen, and very much in the lush, seamless style of the big directors.

I had just seen Lawrence of Arabia and was deeply affected by the power of the panoramic view, the small moving figure overwhelmed by the enormity of the
landscape. In later years I became obsessed with the cramped, confined space of the 16 mm frame, the abruptness of the jump cut and the edgy roughness of cinema verite. But at this point of time, on this hot summer afternoon, while I waited on the verandah of Mrs Spike's liver brick Californian bungalow, I was totally pre-French New Wave.

Filming my life, as it happened, was an activity that I could undertake for almost any amount of time. It often worried my parents, for it gave me a dreamy, spaced-out look.

When people remarked that I was a bit 'quiet' my mother just smiled and said that I was a quiet child; 'very sensitive.' The real meaning of sensitive was always obscure. But it was a word that people found easier to use than 'timid,' as 'sensitive' still had some dubious glamour to it. For a boy in his early teens, to be timid, was a problem.

On some days, any expression of interest in me became a gruelling interrogation. Constantly being told to speak up I faltered over my words and became intensely aware of the moist surface of my face and hands.

But all the time that was happening, I was filming. I detailed the clothes of the friendly, but frustrated person who was trying to engage me in conversation, or I went to a wide shot. I pictured myself as small figure within the great desert of the room. Anything to avoid the attention, the intensity of being talked to.

So, on this day, I was filming a sequence of David Lean proportions, making the slowest of pans, when the legs of Mrs Spike entered the top of my frame. She never missed a beat, never showed any surprise as she addressed me in her clipped, professional manner. As though we were about to deal with an issue of considerable delicacy and importance, an issue that was both pressing and unavoidable.

___ Cup of tea dear?

___ Yes thank you.
Look dear those children have been stealing things, they break in and steal whatever they like. I've had enough and will shortly be notifying the Police and those children will have to pay me for what has been taken.

She grew a little flushed as she spoke and then we both moved into the dark hallway of her house. She did not mention the theft again that day, but in the following weeks it came up from time to time.

Once inside there was the usual business of making tea and finding biscuits. It could take some time for she often produced two pots of tea. One was strong and the other was weak, and of course, there was a pot of hot water, in case the weak one became strong. There was also a range of biscuits from savoury to sweet. They had a stale deliciousness to them that I loved.

Often, over tea, Mrs Spike would point out some of her favourite objects. On this day we looked at the ceramic Siamese cat and the electric clock.

__ Keeps perfect time dear, just look at the second hand move, truly wonderful to have. __

There above the kitchen stove, to the left of the cat, was a simple electric clock, it's red hairline second hand moving relentlessly in a silent circumnavigation of the clock face.

Then there was the tapestry table cloth, which apparently some 'busy-fingered children' had picked at while their lesson was on, fraying one side badly. At her instruction, I gently ran my hand over the weave as she spoke, a boy's hand against the brown coloured threads,

__ See dear it is beautiful, but fidgeting is the sign of wasted brain activity, so hands away and still, please, unless of course, you are writing. __

My hands went straight back to the intimate security of my trouser pockets.

This round of 'lovely things' was repeated regularly and I always enjoyed it. I was fascinated with each of these loved objects, but most of all, I enjoyed the quite legitimate time wasting aspect of it all, for the French lesson was nothing
less than torture. Not the lest because I was often given Latin. She would point out that

_ Latin is the root of language and this will steady your grasp on both French and English.

At the time I just thought it was part of the deal Mrs Spike had struck with my mother. I can see now that she confused me with my brother, Phillip.

_ Qui docet discet. dear, that's what I tell every student, Qui docet discet, which is Latin for ' who teaches learns '. Now I believe it, for I have taught for many years. Look dear, at this wonderful Latin text, I know it cannot be found today. I just don't know what they teach with now, this is a valuable book, and I think I am the only person in Australia with it.

Mrs Spike searched through her bookcase again and found a small, red book of French proverbs and sayings. When she spoke her voice was loud and her breath sour; both filled the room completely.

_ Now dear I think this will be of help to you, and rather interesting. These are French proverbs and sayings that are similar in English, so you have a chance to translate something you know already.

She found the page she wanted and set them out for me to copy and then translate. As she left me to start the translation my mind wandered, I was thinking about the morning's Science class. I remembered the overwhelming boredom that was only relieved by the anticipation of lunchtime and the sight of the boy next to me, whose left hand moved restlessly within his pocket.

_ How is the first one dear,

Mrs Spike called from the kitchen, as she knew instinctively my attention had wandered.

_ It's a little difficult.
Think about your home dear, someone built it, and your parents bought it, and your mother shops in the day for the evening meal. Oh and what do horses eat.

She seemed to love the cryptic hint, embellishing it to a point of immense complexity. I reread the sentence and flipped through the dictionary, feigning a spirit of inquiry.

That's it dear, consult the Oxford English/French Dictionary, excellent plan of attack. It's a beautiful book. I love words, do you love words, I know you must because you speak very well dear, very well indeed for a young student. I think words are like people, very interesting to get to know. And, of course, unlike some people, they remain loyal friends for your entire life.

I agreed that I loved words as well, but finally had to say that I was unable to work out what these particular words meant. She strode back from the kitchen to sort out the problem. She looked at me intently, as she always did when there was the need for peak concentration.

"Make hay while the sun shines" dear.

Eventually I was allowed to progress to the next one.

Now dear think of the creek.

I thought of the creek, but it was of no use. I was convinced that the French and their English equivalents were totally unrelated.

There were only six sentences but it took the whole lesson to make it to the fourth one. Each of them was impossibly obscure, using the language in such an idiomatic and irregular manner that my every attempt brought forth a series of even more complicated hints and explanations.

And each time I settled into the task, I could see my Science class, rows of oily faced boys with moist underarms, their bodies unable to stay completely still, some part of them continually moving, even if it was only a hand drumming on the desk top.

9. Swimming with Sharks. 'French in the afternoon.'
Well the expression is "still waters run deep." and so they do dear, I feel that is true of you too. You are very sensitive I feel, you take it all in and keep it there for later. Which is like myself, a little. You see dear I'm a student of human kind. I'm never bored, if I have to wait at platform for the train, or for the bus, I just watch the people passing by. It's an education, I could watch people for hours.

We often talked like that, discussing some larger issue concerning the world. On this day Mrs Spike took her hand bag and found her packet of TDP throat pastels. She offered me one and then gave a sort of testimonial about them. They were so useful she often had a few before going to sleep, just to ward off any chills.

I came in for a close-up to catch the sheen of the soft plastic bag filled with pink sugar coated jellies. They tasted quite awful to me, but I did not let on.

Now dear have you seen this magazine, Paris Match, it is quite beautiful, with lots of fascinating articles. The French are a very sophisticated people, but I think at the moment this magazine is a little old for you, however just look at this wonderful cover.

This day had been a particularly good one for filming, some visits she prepared an endless range of translating tasks, but on this day, we had only done four proverbs, choosing instead to look at lots of her interesting things. I was keen to give the farewell scene a big production look.

The walk to the door, along the corridor was always my key sequence. It was a dark hallway, but above the door the fan light of clear glass let through a single shot of afternoon sunlight. When we walked through this shaft of light our eyes squinted with its brilliance.

I could see the close up of her wrinkled face, dusted in pale apricot powder, her forehead creased against the harsh light. Pulling back for the wide shot we were both fringed in a golden rim of highlight. Mrs Spike walked ahead and opened the door. The screen was engulfed in a flood of yellow light.

Then I cut to a backlit close up of our parting handshake, bent, arthritic hands linked momentarily with the smooth hands of a youth. Her diamond ring gave a

9. Swimming with Sharks. 'French in the afternoon.'
sharp glint and I cut to the verandah for a wide finishing shot. I walked demurely to the gate and waved.

It was the same every Tuesday.

When I heard the door close I ran down the street, the camera pulled back in an ecstatic, sweeping crane sequence that finished with me as a tiny moving figure, the only moving thing in the still landscape of suburban houses and streets. I was lost amongst the dense texture of the city, dissected, it was cut into black and sunset orange segments. From this height they looked like strips of crumpled paper.

By the time I reached the end of the street, I slowed to a walk and began re-running some particularly interesting scenes shot during the Science class that day. I had been trying to run them all through the French lesson but Mrs Spike kept calling back my attention.

I had in my mind a compelling sequence, and one that I was to return to often that week. It was a clever, double layered shot, looking across my school desk. The top half of the screen showed our Indian Science teacher, slowly writing on the board the major groupings of volcanic rocks. The bottom half of the screen showed the boy next to me. His was face impassive, as out of sight, beneath his desk, he gently pushed at the full, rounded shape of his erection, as it lay trapped within his grey woollen trousers.

Ike plans to avoid the war.

— Well face it Eric, lets face it old son. You cannot build a perpetual motion machine. Sir Isaac Newton told us that.

Bert paused, but only briefly.

— In other words laddy-Jim, your little turbines attached to the car take as much energy to run as they produce. Probably more, looking at the fussy bits you've slapped all over the place.

Bert gave a spare smile. He took a piece of toast and spread it with a thick layer of soft butter, meticulously leaving a margin at the edges.

— But these turbines could be placed at points on the underneath of the car that are minimum drag points.

— Eric was entering the ring again, hoping to win a round by perseverance, although he knew that no argument, no proposition, no elegant exposition of logic could ever outwit the unbroken record of his father.

There was always a flaw in Eric's thinking, always an unseen gap in the defence that left him at the mercy of his father's polished debating style. A style that moved effortlessly from sporadic, needling snipes to a full dirty tricks campaign.

— There are spots Dad where the air flow is quite fast, but not used, not used to improve the aerodynamics, just wasted. 'Eric felt pleased with the word' wasted.
Bert ate his toast, taking his time, looking calm, listening to Eric's conversation in an equally off-hand manner. They were both just floating through it, each of them out-doing the other with off-handed detachment.

Lately Eric had been reading the Popular Mechanics magazines his father borrowed from Vance Charles at the golf club. These exotic magazines from America were full of plans and projects for the weekend handyman. For example he was fascinated with the plan to alter the suspension of the family car and save up to twenty five percent on fuel costs. From these busy pages he had absorbed a rich vocabulary of technological jargon. All of it was needed to deal with Bert.

__So that other thing, you know the idea for suitcases that are moulded to fit into the boot, to save space, I think they could be made with small castors, stainless steel, that would swivel out of place into compartments. These could then be sealed with a sliding panel.]

Bert finished his toast. Then his placid face changed, it wrinkled into a creased expression of irritation.

__Labour, Eric, labour costs are prohibitive on things like fitted cases. Crickey, it would cost a bomb. Then you would have all these strange shaped suitcases that would bump against your legs as you carried them and all the clothes you put in them would get crushed because there would be no straight sides to the cases. Hotel porters would hate them.

Bert moved a little in his chair.

__You would do well at Rolls Royce where the cost factor does not come into it or at Alfa Romeo where it doesn’t have to work, only look good.

Eric wanted to tell Bert that Volkswagon actually made them, lots of Germans loved these odd shaped cases. But that meant admitting it was not his invention. So he slipped into a huff and forgot his plan to return to the turbines beneath the family car, which was genuinely his invention.

9. Swimming with sharks. 'Ike plans to avoid the war.'
Now old son, my only living heir, it’s Sunday School soon, so off to the shower.

Having sorted out the young ’ fella ’ Bert was bright again, full of lightness and affection.

Eric felt tired at the thought of Sunday School. The enormous church hall with its apricot bricks, the small windows that were too high to let the air in. All that talk of lions that lay down with lambs, all that stuffy closed in feeling of being trapped with a whole group of kids that he never played with at school. It was depressing.

Bert cleared the table and washed the breakfast things while Eric showered. It became clear to him, as he rubbed the scratchy towel over the fine skin of his chest, that Bert had slipped on a whole range of crucial points.

He dried himself slowly, methodically, enjoying the familiar feel of his heat softened skin, his moist nakedness. This process of feeling and comforting his own body was an endless activity. A relentless reassurance of his own physical presence.

When the plates were finished Bert ran the grey and pink dish cloth over the raspberry swirl of the laminex table. At some points he had to rub hard to pick up the remnants of breakfast.

Eric was still sorting out his father’s lapses of logic as he pulled on his shorts. Anyway, he thought, his father was an English teacher, so what would he know and he never worked on his car, or read the Popular Mechanics books.

When Eric came into the lounge room he found his father pushing the furniture back into it’s formal arrangement.

Just a lick and a promise my boy. Now Soph’ will pick you up after church and then what?

I’ll go down to Simon’s place for a while.

9. Swimming with sharks. Ike plans to avoid the war.
__ What about lunch?

__ I'll have it at Simon's place, like last week.

__ Now are you sure, you know we will have to have Simon over here soon for a return bout, I can't have you being fed by Mrs Fischer every weekend, I'll have the Welfare people on me. 'Minor neglected as father plays golf and drinks beer with male companions in licensed premises'.

Bert smiled but did not laugh. They paused, then Eric spoke.

__ Mrs Fisher said to come for Sunday lunch, yesterday, really.

__ I will phone her now to confirm that and I'll tell Sophie to cut some flowers for you to take.

__ Dad, no.

__ Listen young man you'll stop that bloody petulance and take them. And it is just polite for me to phone, I am not checking up on you. I believe my own flesh and blood.

__ Don't call her, I feel ridiculous.

__ You will be both charming and gentlemanly Mr mouse, Mrs Fischer will be thrilled that you have been so thoughtful. Europeans like that sort of thing. Now I'm going to golf and I'll be back at four. If you want anything go over to Soph, she will be there till I come home. So what are you and Simon up to, what monstrous plans are afoot.

__ We are going down the bush.

__ Well that sounds ok but remember the rule of the bush...

__...don't talk to strange men or pervs.

__ Excellent, it is most important.

9. Swimming with sharks. 'Ike plans to avoid the war.'
He paused again, but this silence was broken when Bert leant down and kissed his son softly in a swift but affectionate way. They agreed one thing—no kisses outside, but inside, out of sight, it was just okay.

Eric felt his father's lips against his cheeks. He smelt his father's sour breath and the last remaining scent of his shaving cream.

When Eric returned he was exhausted by a day of chasing through the bush with Simon. After the enormous lunch with the Fischer family they had run off into the small stretch of dense bushland behind the houses. It was one of the last remaining sections of reserve land near the city.

There was a small creek that ran through the middle of it, which, as it passed through the council tip on it's way, was often littered with stray bits of junk, such as old kerosene tins or sections of broken furniture. These cast-offs were carried down stream when it rained and lodged, sometimes permanently, along the edges of the creek. They were an endless source of fascination to Simon and Eric.

On this day they had gone to all the usual spots, checking for any new bits of junk. They also spent an hour lying naked in the sun, hidden within the bush, out of sight of the world. Here they were free to enjoy the hot sun and the unrestricted pleasure of examining each other bodies in great detail.

They had talked about all the usual things, but again failed to get any closer to that secret, unknown world of adult sexuality. That world of men with women without clothes was so forbidden, so thoroughly foul in nature that even the slightest mention of it when adults were around, was just asking for trouble.

Eric came in to find Bert in the lounge room. He was sunburnt and tired, slowly drinking his beer from the silver plated tankard that he had won years ago playing competition golf. In his hands was a copy of The World Report, supplied to him by Vance Charles, the American who also passed on the Popular Mechanics magazines for Eric.

The late afternoon sun was strong and stifling so Bert had the Venetian blinds set
at half way, to cut the harshness of light. It gave the room a sleepy feel. Every
now and again the blinds would flap up in response to a cool change that was
settling in.

_So how was the day my son._

Bert was relaxed and expansive. It was rare for the two of them to engage in
the debate at these times, rather Bert was happy to hear in as much detail as
possible what his son had been up to, what adventures he had enjoyed. Eric had
learned to go with his father on this indulgent mood. He was unpredictable, any
minute he could slip right back to irrational disciplinarian.

_We went down the bush._

_And what did you get up to?_

_Nothing much._

_How was lunch, did you take the flowers?_

_Yes, Mrs Fischer said thank you and gave you some rum balls._

The packet was broken at one end.

_Acquired taste old boy, very continental, she is a fine Austrian cook, how's
Curt Fischer?_

_Okay._

_Good and what did you have?_

_Chicken...Mr Fischer is going to buy an Austin, I mean he's crazy._

_Man's able to choose his own car you know, even if it's a mistake._

They both giggled conspiratorially.

9. Swimming with sharks. 'Ike plans to avoid the war.'
Trust you did not point that out to him, bit rude you know.

Bert sometimes worried that he was raising a smart-alec.

No - they even have an electric stove instead of gas,

Eric sighed as though this was ample evidence of Mr Fischer's foolishness.

Bert nodded in agreement, and looked down to his new copy of World Report.

Look at that old son. " Ike Plans to avoid the war. "Imagine it, old bomb 'em hard bomb' heavy Ike planning to stop a war". It'd be laughable if it were not so sick-making.

Bert enjoyed introducing his son to international affairs. It was something that excited him but his tone always changed with anything to do with American politics. Eric knew he was on safe ground, it was the President of the United States who was in line for Bert's relentless sarcasm.

What's up.

Eric remarked nonchalantly, hoping that there was still sufficiently right with the world to prevent dinner being held up by one of those long and tedious discussions.

Well frankly my son I don't like Ike. You know lots of silly Americans wander around singing 'I like Ike I like Ike'.

Bert sang the breezy little jingle, rolling his eyes a little and waving his right hand on the off beat. Eric loved this side of his father, but it only showed itself after a couple of Flag Ales. He became a man of jokes and smiles, quips and, if he was in the mood, the occasional light footed dance across the carpet. It was often explained as just something ' my mother used to do after she'd had a few. ' This side made up for the ruthless logic of Bert the debating champion and general know-it-all that he met over breakfast.
And frankly I don't like Ike. He was just a military man, no real understanding of peace, just war, and I think it shows. Smart buggers the Americans.

There was another long standing arrangement between them whereby Bert was able to use words like bugger from time to time, as he was an adult. Eric was forbidden at any time to say bugger. There were other words, known to both of them, but these were simply out of the realm of discussion. These were the words that were scrawled over the fence at the back of school and of course, were all about men and women without clothes on.

I mean how can Ike stop a war, bloody Americans think they won the war single handed; yes, we owe them a lot but we also fought that terrible war. Terrible war that was. We lost good young men, men shots to bits, and the bloody Japs, cruel little buggers.

A silence settled again in the room so Eric took the opportunity to move into the kitchen.

Bert's voice followed him from the lounge room.

What's it to be partner, toasted sandwiches aux Bert? Did you fight your way to any sort of lunch down there with those teaming Fischers.

Can I have pancakes?

Eric often asked for pancakes, always with the same fresh innocence, as though it was a quite unusual and welcome request. Bert winced at the thought of the mess involved, but took a conciliatory tact.

Well have a toasted sandwich and see how the land lies.

All the yelling between rooms was becoming a bit grating so Bert followed Eric into the kitchen.

Why don't you like Ike?
Well he is a colourless man, though some chaps like him greatly,

Bert's annoyance had waned and he was now trying to present a more reasonable and rounded picture. His other fear was that in trying to make his son aware of world issues he ran the risk of encouraging in the boy too much of his own impatient dogmatism.

So concentrated his thought, just so concentrated being an only child. So difficult being a parent. When they are young they can slip away from you and be under a bus in no time. And there's no guarantee that they will not turn into delinquents and steal cars or have illegitimate children.

Is Ike very old?

Well not that old but more old fashioned I'd say big difference there. Now is it roast lamb or cheese with tomato. What's it to be?

Cheese and tomato.

Perhaps you would care to wash the face, and the hands, please, while I attend to dinner.

Bert was slipping into lethargy, exhausted by the hot day and the hours of tedious conversation with Vance Charles.

Eric, also overtired and now overexcited by the likely prospect of pancakes walked in a skittish, dancing style across the floor, sliding dangerously on the smooth lino. He stopped and swivelled on the spot, singing in a breathy, bluesy voice 'I like Ike, I like Ike oh I like Ike.' It was a followed by a faltering exit to the bathroom.

Impassively Bert placed the bread on the grill for toasting. He considered again the same things he always considered when Eric showed off, or was uncontrollably disobedient. He worried about Eric and Simon, if they smoked in the bus shelter after school, and he thought again about what they really got up to, on these long days, alone in the bush.

9. Swimming with sharks. 'Ike plans to avoid the war.'
Swimming with sharks.

Not in here lady, okay.

By the time they reached Albury, Elise was at her wit's end. She had been travelling through Victoria with Jamie. They had planned to go up the Olympic Highway to Wagga, and maybe to Coota', but it all came to a head in front of the Cinema Twin, in Albury. An afternoon session of Smokey and the Bandit had just come out, the street was flooded with kids, when Elise lost it. It was about three in the afternoon.

— Look just stop it, just get out of it. You treat me like shit, get the hell out of it.

Jamie played dumb, looking surprised and shocked, as Elise walked away. She picked up her bag and walked down to the cafe. She only had one bag. At the cafe, she found a seat at the end, near the Indianapolis 500 game. Jamie followed her. She was crying, but she had the look. Jamie knew the look well, and when he saw it, he knew it was probably finished between them.

— Look Jamie, you've got to stop relying on me. I mean, I do everything, I do it all. Don't I?

Elise caught the attention of the Greek proprietor and ordered two cappuccinos. He smiled knowingly, and smacked the steel coffee holder hard against the draw of the bench. The old coffee fell out in a solid plug.

— I am tired Jamie, tired of supporting this relationship while you just float through it all, like it was always my job to keep the show on the road.

— Elise. That's not true, and you know it.
They both fell into silence. She took out a cigarette, Jamie took the packet as the owner placed the milky coffees on the raspberry swirl of the laminex table. The cups had been filled to the very top so they splashed milky froth in their saucers.

__I mean, Jamie, I'm tired of making all the decisions. I think we're moving in different directions.

__But Elise you're the one setting the tone. It's always what's suits you. We came on this boring fucking trip because you wanted to visit the sacred places of your tedious childhood. A sentimental journey to the backblocks of bloody nowhere in particular. Then you get this crazy notion that you're had enough. You have had enough. Christ.

The Greek man was listening, pushing a line of Caramellos a little to the left, in a gesture of business.

__I mean you're so passive, so fucking passive.

She spoke in a loud, clear voice. The proprietor turned quickly and yelled.

__Hey, not in here lady, no language in here, you behave in my milk bar or you're out faster than you came in.

Elise did not acknowledge the comment. He stared at her and she ignored him. He returned to the chocolates, slowly rearranging them again. Elise and Jamie went on squabbling, but more quietly, and with less ' language '. The conversation went round the same issues, the same complaints and irritations that they had talked about for months. They finished the coffees and Elise pulled out her purse.

__Don't worry, I'll pay. I need a break from you, I'm going up to Wagga to see Sarah for a week. We can talk when I get back home. Jamie, I think its best, I really do. We have been taking each other for granted, don't you see that?

__Yea of course, just whatever suits you princess, stay as long as you like with that plump sister of yours and all your half wit, backwoods family, I don't want to see your sour little face for decades.
Get fucked, sweetness.

The man behind the counter yelled something. Elise stood up and walked towards him. He came to the counter for the confrontation. She had the look again as she put down two dollars in small change.

Forgive me Sir, but he's almost as much of a fuckwit as you are. You're a real pair of jumped up dicks.

Get out lady, you got a mouth like a grease trap, get out, and please, don't bother to come back, hey.

Elise walked along to the post office and called her sister, Sarah. They talked about it all. Sarah read out the timetable and was arranging to meet the bus at the Wagga depot when Elise started crying. Sarah sighed.

Alright El, I'll come and get you. I'll be there at seven, I've got to phone Pete. Just wait in the foyer of the Cinema Twin. Come on cheer up, Jamie's always been a bit tricky. O K. Deep breaths and all that stuff. Come on Elise I have to go and pick up the kid. I'm late, he gets worried. Now go down to the Cafe Bo Ho and have a slice of Sascher tort, with cream and icecream. You need some comfort food.

At six thirty Elise wandered into the theatre. She had been careful to watch out for Jamie all afternoon. She had no idea where he had gone and did not want to see him now, so close to the time of her escape. The evening session was filling. Then, unexpectedly, Sarah appeared at the door, she had the kid with her. He was five years old, was wearing a Batman mask and was the first one to see Elise.

As they walked out to the car, Sarah rubbed Elise's shoulders. It was late in December and the afternoon light was low across the road, turning the cars yellow, making them all look like they had just been washed.
Sorry El but I hate driving to Albury in the afternoon. But it wasn’t too bad, I had the kid to keep me company. He loves a drive. So the old fella’s been a pain has he?

Sarah looked at a dress in the Country Road shop as she spoke.

In the car they talked it all through, from every angle, except Jamie’s of course. At Uranquinty, about fifteen minutes from Wagga, Elise asked if she could stay for a week. Sarah had been waiting for it.

Long as you like.
Great, I’ll have to stay a few nights with Mum and Dad. I guess I’ll be a week with you. I need some space, I’ll mind Ben and you and Pete can go out for a change.
We go out a lot. Mum loves the kid, he’s almost been adopted by her.
Sorry. You know what I mean.
Stay as long as you like El. You’ll regret that offer. No, it’s lovely to see you, we should all go down to the wine-bar tonight. I rang and told Mum, she said to drop in on the way through. Said she thought it was very sad.

Sarah drove at about a hundred and twenty k. With her left hand she put a Susan Vaga tape into the cassette player, but kept it low.

Pete’s really pleased to hear you’re staying. He never took to your little surfie. Doesn’t matter what I say about Jamie’s cute backside, or the fact that you two were always in bed, at it. I mean Jamie is sort of sweet, I always liked him. I know that’s the wrong thing to say, just at the moment, he’s probably been a real prick to you. Look it’s between you two, I’m not taking sides.

Susan Vaga filled the space in the conversation when Elise went quiet. She watched the road sweep up the first hill they’d seen in thirty minutes. At the crest was a large Pizza Hut sign. Then the Kapuka Army battalion buildings appeared. Elise knew it all so well, she was enjoying ticking off the landmarks to Wagga.

Last Christmas, when she had driven up with Jamie, for the family get together, she had ticked off those landmarks with dread and loathing. The family was
meeting her new boyfriend for the first time, they were all nervous. Jamie had made a few smart remarks about Wagga and the men in the family never really forgave him. They held a strong suspicion that he was a ' queer ' and joked in private about the size of ' the poofter's little prick '. Sarah told the boys to ' just grow up knuckleheads, he's Elise's friend and you should respect that '. Jamie had charmed Elise's mother by giving her a Christmas kiss.

Still, her mother would never approve of them sleeping together under the family roof. So they had stayed with Sarah, on the verandah. It was at the back of the house and closed in with frosted glass louvres. In the warm, sleepy mornings the kid came into the bed with them. Sarah had asked them to wear pyjamas.

So they made love in the night, after everyone had gone to bed. They were careful to be quiet, for the wooden walls transmitted every secret sigh or rustle like an announcement on the radio. Jamie was very brown that year. Elise loved to run her hand over his stomach, trying to feel where the skin changed colour from a dirty tan to a soft white.

When she woke up, in the morning, she would put her face close to his. As they lay in the solid December sunlight, under the sheets, half clothed, she would mumble into his ear. Her hand hidden in his boxer shorts, covering the rounded shape of his hip bone.

It's like you've been at the quick-tan, James the surfie, Jimmy the spunk, Jamie with the tiny backside and the sad brown eyes.

She was careful to whisper. He was awake, but kept his eyes closed. Still, behind the laid back, dreamy relaxation, was an ever present worry. They were both on the alert for the kid's inevitable forced entrance into the bed.

Elise was running it over in her mind. The close mornings with Jamie, and the kid. That was last Christmas, and now James was a shit. Now she wanted him out her life.

It was not easy. She knew how to walk away and leave him stuck in a country town. She had half planned that. But now she wanted him out of her thoughts,
somehow he was having his revenge by hanging around inside her head. She just wanted to stop thinking about him.

They drove into Wagga, well over the speed limit, past the used car lot and then down Dobney Avenue. At the Gurwood Street corner shop, Sarah stopped for a few things. She left the kid with Elise and went in to buy some more milk, cream and a frozen cheese cake.

It was cool inside and she took her time. She told her friend Cath, who had owned the shop for a couple of years, about her sister coming to stay and then they talked for a while about the league match on Saturday. But they were interrupted when the kid came running into the shop.

_ She's crying.

Sarah walked out onto the warm pavement and saw her sister hunched over in the front of car. ‘Christ alive, I can't stand it, the longest seven days in history, coming up, right now’. She actually spoke out aloud, but no one heard her.

So, she went and paid Cath. Then, after getting the kid organised into his seatbelt, she climbed into the front of the car. She slowly pulled Elise to her, kissed her and said something about going out for dinner.

Powerlines.

__ Bloody Monopoly, always starts a fight.

My mother swore in an audible whisper. We were all trapped in the house, unable to leave, forced to live out the last days of the holidays, playing Monopoly and avoiding fights. My mother was always the arbiter between myself and my sister, Elise.

__ Just leave him alone--let him win for once.

We had been playing for about an hour and were badly entrenched. Elise desperately wanted Pall Mall, and I was holding out.

__ Look just stop it, just stop this endless fighting. The Monopoly set is now banned 'til Christmas, go on, go into the other room. I'll put it all away. I think I'll hide it, or burn it. You two are not sensible enough to play with it.

The steady rain had left the backyard heavy and sodden, you could not even set foot in it. Still, we went to the window to look at it.

__ My friend Alison is a millionaire, you know. She said that when she goes to Coffs Harbour for the holidays she will spent a thousand pounds. Then they are going to Surfer's Paradise to stay at Lenon's Hotel.

Elise was writing 'Hello' in the moist surface of the window as she spoke.

__ Alison has special brown bread for lunch and a thermos flask that has hot chocolate in it. And she has a dress worth forty pounds.
I listened, making tracks in the dust on the window sill. I wrote 'hello'. Elise looked down at it in dismay.

__ Copy cat. You always copy. Can't you write your own words.

__ Now why don't you two play the Powerline game.

My mother folded up the Monopoly board. She was smoking a Benson's & Hedges cigarette. She loved them, drawing in their blue smoke deep into her lungs and slowly blowing it out, dusty grey.

__ I can see a mountain. Over there, see it, it's a mountain in Switzerland, it's got snow on the top and there are cows walking down the side to the barn at the bottom, near the farmer's house.

Elise pointed to the mass of wires, cables and steel framework that made up the electrical substation at the back of our house. This huge collection of transformers came right up to the back fence. We stared at it and tried to find shapes of things amongst the beams and powerlines.

__ I can't see the mountains but I can see a dog.

__ Golly. You are dumb. There is a mountain just over there, to the left of the Harbour Bridge.

__ I think I can see the lead on the dog.

__ You are dumb Simon. Just stop being dumb please. You always do that.

__ Look gang I'll just smack the pair of you. You are not too old for it. Or you'll have to go to your rooms, till Dad comes home.

My mother drew heavily on her B & H at times like that.

__ Bloody kids, fucking rain, Jesus Christ, almighty.
This was a whisper that I just heard, there were other bits but I missed them. I knew she said something else, because I saw the broken rush of smoke from her mouth.

Well he started it, he does not want to play properly.

I don't care, I just do not care. Look after him, he is younger than you, teach him, he's your younger brother. Don't you know how lucky you are Elise.

That's right Elise.

Elise became quite red in the face, then she began to cry, and in a crumpled shuffle, she went to her room.

Christ alive.

My mother's voice was clear and audible. She went to the cupboard and took out the cake tin, the colander and the flour shifter. Then the cake ingredients, flour, eggs, butter and vanilla essence.

I helped by arranging them on the table.

Are we going to make a cake.

Simon, tell Elise we are all going to make a cake. And stop annoying your sister, stop being awful to her, just grow up buster. OK.

Elise would not talk to me so Mum had to go and tell her. All I could hear from the kitchen was the muffled sounds of them talking. It sounded like the bath filling.

I opened the Women's Weekly Cake Book at Orange Cake Special. Elise walked back into the room.

It's going to be a chocolate cake, stupid.

Mum breezed in and ignored the scrap.
Now watch the mess kids, or I'll brain the pair of you. One to mix and one to read the book, takes two to tango, a joint effort, scratch my back and I'll scratch something of yours.

She raised her eyebrows at us. It was the family code of 'let's keep it light'. The phone rang and my mother wandered off to answer it. I just caught bits of the conversation. It was Betty, one of Mum's friends. They always said the same things to each other.

Yes pig of a day, no they're with me...not too bad...watch the news there may be a double murder before six...well; we have run out of holiday things and it's raining like the clappers...Dave is great on things like that, yea, yea, Simon...get my fags...

I took over the gold box, the lighter and the ash tray.

Oh fresh ash tray please sweet, thanks.

So I went back for a clean, cut glass ash tray. And so I knew she would talk for hours. When I came back to the kitchen Elise had opened the book to the chocolate section.

Butter the dish please. And do be careful.
No.
Well you can't have any when it's cooked.
I wouldn't want any.

I just flicked the tea towel up over the baking dish and went into the lounge room. My mother was chatting at her usual speed. I stared out into the backyard. It was grey in the sky, the lawn looked like it was made of scrappy bits of crape paper and the paling fence had turned black in the rain. I put my hand in my pocket and gently reached under the elastic of my underpants.

Simon, please.

Somehow my mother had X-Ray vision. She never really stopped talking to
Betty, but she had time to interrupt me. I did not turn around, I just went to the window and wrote 'hello' several times, under Elise's 'hello'. Then I rubbed them all out. I wanted to draw something that I saw in the bus shelter, but I just knew old X-Rays would see it. Anyway, I found a clear section of window sill and in my smallest writing I wrote 'fuck'.

The rain fell solidly for the rest of the afternoon. Elise fussed over her chocolate cake, spending tedious minutes getting the flow just right on the piping syringe. It was made of tinned metal and had a range of screw-in nozzles. Elise chose a fine, serrated shape to ooze onto the glossy cake 'Hello to our Dad'.

When I walked past the decorated cake I ran my hand around the bottom of it and took a large, dirty smear of icing on my finger.

_ Mum. You're going to really get it.

_ Stop it now.

_ He's wrecked Dad's cake, on purpose.

_ Look Bet the animals are at each other's throat's again... Yea, lovely to talk to you... yea, we should do the picnic... he does... yea... bye. . thanks for the call...

My mother put the phone down slowly and picked up the cigarettes and came into the kitchen.

_ Both of you, go to your rooms till your father comes home. I have had it. Both of you have crossed the line. Come on, its only half an hour, I just don't want to hear from you till he comes down the drive.

She had that cold, distant look of resignation. I have only just acquired it myself. It is a look that says, 'don't try me'.

My room was on the dark side of the house and felt quite damp. If I left my cupboard closed too much my football boots got mould on them. I felt a sharp, cold draft that made me shiver. I went under the bedclothes and pushed my hand under my shirt, away from the laser glare of old X-rays. I felt the intense

9. Swimming with sharks. 'Powerlines.'
warmth of my own body, the ribs beneath my smooth, thick skin. I felt the clear expanse of my chest right down to my navel. The bedroom door opened.

_Look_ Simon, it is only six o'clock, bit early for bed time, come out sweet. Have a cup of tea, Dad's home in a minute, come on, its no good brooding.

My mother closed the door again. So I got up, tucked in my shirt and went out to the lounge room. I heard Dad's car come down the drive. He came in, as usual, right on time. I said hello and kissed him, but Elise remained in her room.

_What's wrong with Elise, why is she in her room at this hour._

_Oh she's like that sometimes, don't push it, just leave her to come out when she's ready._

My father went to the fridge, took a bottle of Flag Ale and poured two glasses of beer. My parents sat down together, as they often did at this time, to discuss the day. I went to see if my scribbled 'fuck' had been discovered. It had, the whole window sill having been wiped clean. I sat in the lounge and turned on the TV, quietly so that it would not be too noticeable that I was now using up my allotted hour of television. I listened closely to my parents talking.

_Dave I think you should tell him to buzz off, you worked hard for that contract, don't let the chap take it from you at this stage._

_Well if it were only that simple, he is the area manager and in a way he can do this but it not very cool of him. I could punch his lights out but this mortgage instalment keeps arriving each month you know, and I have a wife and two growing children._

_Dave. Christ, forever the child, forever the smart-alec reply._

_No gal, you are so off the beam on this one._

My mother stood up and walked to the window, she looked across to me, but said nothing. It was time for a cigarette, I saw her take one gently and throw the pack to my father, who caught it and smiled.

9. Swimming with sharks. 'Powerlines.'
Hey gal, you wanta go dancin' at the Troc' tonight.

She arched her back, and smiled.

Listen kid, I'd like fish and chips at Manly Wharf, its been a very wet day here.

Alright, just let me get in the door and finish this drink, give me five minutes, for a change before we go out again.

Picnic with Al and Bet, possible?

Sounds like heaven.

What about the weekend?

I'm busy on the weekend for ten years. No sounds fine, I told you, I like Al, he's a silly old woman, but I like him, it'd be very pleasant. We could go down to the National Park, Bundeena.

Long drive, still Bet loves the park, she's expecting.

So they chatted and I absorbed every word while I watched Maxwell Smart and Ninety Nine. At school I often talked like Maxwell Smart. I had seen the episode before, which always made it more enjoyable. I sat close to the gas heater, hoping that Elise would come out of her room and find me hogging the fire and watching TV.

My father finished his beer and took the glasses to the sink. He looked to the kitchen wall and yelled into the house.

Elise, Elise its time to go Manly, who cares about the rain, there's dodgem cars and hot dogs and I am having fish and chips. Simon and I challenge the girls to an air gun tournament. Come on sweetness, I love the cake, in fact I've just given the last mouthful to the dog. Oh she loves it, the cat hated it but Molly loves it.

9. Swimming with sharks. 'Powerlines.'
Dave, for Christ's sake, please don't tease her tonight, it's been thin ice territory all day.

9. Swimming with sharks. 'Powerlines.'

Princess

_He stole sun-glasses, quite often apparently, whenever they went into a chemist shop.

Elise smiled as she spoke.

_At Christmas everyone in the family got sun-glasses, of course there were no cases to go with them.

As Elise spoke her parents listened intently and then laughed, as if she was still six, holding forth and impressing the adults as she told her news of the day.

_Sounds like a resourceful chap, oh yes not unlike some of the chappies at the Worker's Club.

Jack was Elise' father, and chuckled benevolently as she spoke. Then redirected the conversation, as he usually did, when he was bored.

_You know mother and I are off to Mittagong next week. I have organised a bus trip for the bowlers. I had no idea how it would go, but it filled up in a week. Two nights, a pleasant motel, a look at the spring bulbs and a game of bowls. Not bad really for the price. You know there's more money tucked away here than you'd think.

Elise's mother, Sybil, began to clear the lunch things from the table, carefully removing the half finished plates of potato salad and pale asparagus.
You know it is good for some of the older ones to get out. I've been trying to get a link up with the chappies at Mittagong for a while now and Bob, who plays there a bit, managed to approach the captain, so with a little bit of forward planning we got the bus trip going.

Elise interrupted.

You've rather taken over the place by the sound of it, bet they don't know what's hit them.

He is the John Elliott of the bowling club.

Sybil spoke up from the kitchen. Jack was pleased with the comparison and continued.

You know most people want to leave it all to someone else. But Mother and I are in good health, and I feel we have a contribution to make. You can't just take all the time. And anyway we have made some great friends up here. I've met some lovely chaps, lovely people, haven't we Sybil.

He spoke excitedly, only stopping as he realised there was still food on his plate and that he was holding up desert.

As Sybil placed the bowls of fruit and ice-cream on the table Jack gave me a hesitant glance and asked.

How's bis ?

Good lately, a few things are on the go.

I deliberately and carefully lied, as I always did, when Jack asked this sort of question.

For some reason he wanted to know a bit more than usual. He was keen to know how much money a person, "like yourself, in your sort of position" might need to invest. I told him a figure and he calculated in his head how much such an amount would return, if carefully invested elsewhere. Then he asked me if I had

9. Swimming with sharks. 'Princess.'
a good business. I told him businesses like mine were up and down, but when you made money, it was very good. He looked nervous, as though he did not understand, or perhaps had asked a question that was too personal.

Elise took some bread from the table and we walked into the garden to feed the ducks. As we fed them Jack pointed to the half finished house next door. He told me that when they first came here he had bought the two blocks, but only had enough money to build one house. Now he had the time and money to do the second one. So we walked over to have a look. Elise’s mother went back to the kitchen to load the dishwasher with the lunch things. She joked that she knew every nail in the new place and that it was a house rule that visitors did not help with the dishwasher.

Inside the new house Elise’s father walked around like a foreman, showing us the unfinished floor and telling us in great detail about using chip board instead of floor boards. Then he took us to the kitchen and demonstrated how easy it was to put the edges on the melamine bench tops. Elise laughed as he fussed about with the delicate strips of edging. He looked up and smiled, a little confused as to why we were amused.

__ Well Princess, it’s what I enjoy doing. Mother helps of course, she is doing all the staining.

In the hallway Jack moved a bag of sand but looked flushed as he stood up from it. Elise told him to be careful.

__ Threepence I lift that sort of thing all the time, but I’m careful, there’s a brickie here most days, he’s paid to put his back out, not me; or I call Charles over.

" God; Charles is older than you. "

He looked a little chastened and moved us onto the car-port and then we walked back for afternoon tea. As we crossed the lawn the ducks followed a few metres behind. In the kitchen the tea cups had been washed and reset on the table. There was a floral bowl with pieces of walnut slice on it.
Elise’s mother looked up from her knitting and told us to sit while she poured the water into the pot. She was a small woman and Elise had explained to me how her father had built all the bend tops in the kitchen a little lower than usual, to make it easier for her to work in.

_ Threepence, if you have a minute, I have some papers for you to look at, only take a minute._

As always, he was secretive about the family affairs, even after the years I had spent with Elise, he took her to a bedroom for the discussion. Their voices became remote whispers, barely audible. As I sat there it sounded as though, far off in the house, someone was slowly, very gently, folding and flattening sheets of cellophane.

So I turned to Sybil and chattered about the ducks that just blew in for weeks at a time. They had found a position near the gum tree and brought up their ducklings on the little pools that formed on the sandstone when it rained. Lately Sybil had kept these shallow duck ponds filled.

I felt more relaxed now as we talked but always in the back of my mind was the desire for a drink. Sometimes, when we visited, we were offered a sherry or beer, but not always.

I asked Sybil how long the house would take and she smiled broadly again, looking a little to the ceiling she shook her head gently, _" Well I think he'll drag it out for months yet._

_ Now what's the story on the stain._

Sybil looked to me and thoughtfully replied.

_ Well, I think it should be darker, Father has left it to me, so I'll redo the bits in the kitchen and make the upstairs darker again. I mean it's worth doing properly, I really do think that._

After tea Elise’s father told us it was time to go, if we wanted to miss the beach traffic. He fidgeted with his watch as he spoke.
Take you about an hour and ten to get to the highway, do you think mother, an hour and ten.

No. More like fifty minutes on a Sunday.

Elise's mother looked cross as though this question of driving time had been a long standing issue.

Well it is worth heading off either way.

We said goodbye at the car-port, with a minimum of fuss, no kisses or hugs. As we pulled out I heard the old man call out.

Bye Princess, bye.

In the car going back Elise was laughing at my jokes about the lunch and the new house. She was relieved to be going home, and I felt like I a school kid who couldn't stop talking. Still we relaxed by the time highway came up and Elise just sat and stared into the evening sky for a while. And she just started talking about her father.

He was terrible when I was growing up. One day he came home early from work and drove around till he found us. We were just talking to some boys at the bus stop and this VW pulled up and out he jumped. Just so angry. We were just so embarrassed when he told us to get in the car.

She paused a while, I had nothing to say, I was just listening, watching the road, looking at the other people next to us in the traffic or just keeping the car straight in the lane. When Elise and I were in the car we never looked at each other, we spoke or were silent, felt close or distant, but we never looked at each other.

He was impossible with any boys who came around to the house after school, just told them to go away. They would walk up the path and he'd confront them as though they were criminals. He once told me, in all seriousness that he knew

9. Swimming with sharks. 'Princess.'
'what happened in bus shelters after school'. I hated him then; he was just crazy.

In the next lane a car was pacing us. It was driven by a muscular man in his early twenties. His face was sunburnt and childlike. As he wore only shorts, he seemed at some points, when his car crept ahead of us, to be naked. I noticed Elise looking at him, dispassionate, but observant. She continued talking, but in a more distant sort of way.

__ They are both much better now, Jack has the bowlers to organise and Sybil has the house under control, no kids to disturb the neatest house in history.

Then Elise looked to me and said flatly.

__ Anyway. They like you.

Tarbabies

I photographed two Japanese ladies, in front of McDonalds. I felt the tiny matchbox of a camera snatch their impassive faces with a small click, like a twig being broken. When I gave back the camera they smiled broadly in thanks. They were as sad as mourners while their photograph was being taken, but when it was all over, they started to laugh and smile, just like tourists having a great time.

I met Jamie that morning. I was about to have a swim and he was reading the paper, an unopened pack of Malboroughs was waiting with his take-away coffee. I sat down on the bench next to him and we just talked about nothing. I saw him every day till my job in Surfers finished and I finally had to go home to Sydney.

__ These ones are real tarbabies.

Jamie opened the packet of Malborough Red and smelt the sweet tobacco. He lit one and drew the smoke down to his navel, felt the burn and the drifting dizziness. I know the feeling, I used to smoke. He likes to have this first one of the day on the beach, just before work, at seven o’clock. For Jamie this was a ritual, like morning prayers.

__ First one of the day is special. Its the only one that tastes OK, you have got to plan it, can’t waste it. When I work nights I make sure I’ve got a new pack for the morning. I hate going out to get them, I like to have coffee and a smoke in the morning. My life’s ruled by the tarbabies.

He flicked the first few millimetres of the ash in a high arc to the bin. A brand loyal smoker, he was unshakeable in his habits. Always held the cigarette the
same way, always put it out when it reached the same distance from the butt.

In front of us was Surfers Paradise Beach. They clean it every morning with a tractor. The huge steel sand sweeper was making long, slow passes of the waterfront. Crawling like a sea creature, it was taking in mouthfuls of sand and blowing it out behind. But it was not looking for food, it was after the morning's crop of lost wedding rings, and spent syringes.

Jamie worked in the cafe half way down Cavill Mall. It was owned by a tall man in his forties, with died brown hair and a heavy suntan. It made his face look like it was knocked together out of rusted sheet iron.

The first day I saw Jamie he told me, just in passing, that he was going to the Casino with some friends. I went to have a look. I thought I saw him at the gaming room, but after a while I gave up. So I played some Backgammon and then listened to the band.

They were like remodelled versions of Dolly Parton and Kenny Rogers, but they were younger and slimmer. They were effortlessly talented clones. The songs just ran out of them, perfect and passionless, not too loud, so you could talk over them, and always familiar. They only sang the big hits.

I met Jamie on the beach the following morning. I told him about my job as a consulting engineer. But we really just talked about Surfers, how weird it was, how trashy it was to live here. This led us onto detective novels for a while. We arranged to have dinner, after he finished work, at a restaurant in the Mall.

Jamie came back to my hotel. He stayed the next couple of nights as well. We would watch TV and order room service, drink wine and whisky, and lie on the soft bed together. I was exactly thirty five and Jamie was twenty three or so. I knew him for about week.

He liked to tell me stories about the cafe and the people who wandered in. Like the two women who came in the other day. They were in their early thirties and dressed in white Comme de Garcon T shirts, Reeboks and lots of real gold chains.
So Jamie took their order and served them the coffee, but as he walked away he heard them laugh. When he came back with the cakes their faces were pink from laughing under their breath so much.

He never lets that sort of thing worry him, so he put down the order and left them. He is a true professional like that, he never speaks to the customer unless they want him to. So finally one of the women called him over again and apologised for being so rude.

__ I'm sorry love but we're bored out of minds. My friend had just remarked on your cute backside.

That started them laughing again for a few moments.

__ Well we are here on a conference for real estate agents and its terrible. Terminal boredom.

__ Where do you come from?

__ Oh Melbourne. I sell bits of Collins and Bourke, Elaine here sells Clifton Hill.

__ Yeah but the market's so flat we both thought a week in the sun might be a blast. Bet rang up one day and said look there’s this conference in Surfers, could be some hunks and so I said let’s go, a tax deductible hunk is just what I need at the moment.

They laughed again, then lit up cigarettes and he moved away from their table. There's always another customer to serve. Jamie liked the job but he was just saving money, just waiting till he had enough to take off to Indonesia.

I had planned to go home on the Friday but I extended the ticket till the Tuesday. I had to juggle an arrangement to take out the kids on the weekend. I just said that the job was running overtime.

Elaine just said,

__ fine, so at this short notice you're changing things. After next Wednesday
don't bother to call me, just speak to Carl, direct, he'll have the papers drawn up by Friday, we'll double the maintenance. I'm particularly jealous of the weather.

We laughed, Carl is our Solicitor. It was our standard joke, more maintenance. There was a time when we said these things and meant them. For some reason we liked each other more these days, now that we were separated. We both had room for secrets, and anyway, Elise earnt more money than I did.

I told her about the Gold Coast, and how things were going and she told me about a huge storm that knocked down half of Wahroonga. Finally, we struck a deal where I would take the kids on Tuesday night so she could go out. This meant, of course, there could be no more changes in my plans, I had to leave on Tuesday.

It rained from Friday till lunchtime on Sunday, turning Surfers into a strange and claustrophobic suburb. The picture theatres and shopping centres were crowded, tired parents and hyperactive kids. All along the beach front people walked in the drizzle, trying to drag some enjoyment out of their ruined holidays.

Jamie worked the weekend nights till twelve and so we ate late, going onto the casino for roulette or backgammon. The mornings were great. We watched Rage in bed till eleven and ate bacon and eggs. The eggs were scrambled into large soft folds, moist and rich on thick white toast. I never had eggs at home because my Pritikin book told me they were poison for men over twenty.

I told Jamie I was leaving on Tuesday.

Yeah, thanks, you are a sweet guy. Yeah I might call in when I get back from Indonesia, but I don't know when that might be. I was thinking of going up to K.L. and then to India. Don't know yet.

He kissed me. I put my hand on his forehead, he closed his eyes. His face was fine, quite narrow and covered in pale freckles. You did not notice them till you were close. He groaned in mock passion.

Sleep with me, come sleep the big sleep, the long one, the dark passage that we must all pass through...well at least come back to bed, I'm cold.
So instead of the big sleep, we slipped into a small sleep. A sleep of half waking where I could still feel him. A gentle sleep where I could move between vivid dreams and the wakeful sensations of burning indigestion. A thin wall of sleep that let me hear Jamie's hoarse breathing. We rolled about and twitched in this sleep, and I slowly kissed him.

I caught the direct flight at noon. Elise brought the kids to meet me, it was holiday time and they always liked airports. They told me I was going to take them to Terminator 11, and I said no, because I was not old enough.

I told Elise about the Japanese photo routine. She said I was a racist, but she still laughed.

9. Swimming with sharks. 'Tarbabies.'
9. **Swimming with sharks.**

**Without trace.**

At the corner of Liverpool Street Sally told the taxi driver to stop, which he did immediately, abruptly pulling to the kerb and double parking. For what seemed a long time, he held up the line of traffic behind, while Sally paid the fare. These cars behind began pushing into the next lane, lurching past them, as soon as the smallest break appeared.

As Sally stepped onto the pavement, the taxi made a fast u-turn, but nobody seemed to mind, no one blew their horn, the other cars just let him join the traffic, not even stopping, they just slowed a little.

She walked along to the Exchange Hotel and into the bar, where she ordered a Heineken. It was just four in the afternoon, and the bar was almost empty. She talked to the barman for a while, telling him all the usual things, she was originally from Narrandera, here for the week, having a great time.

As usual, he asked how she found the traffic in Sydney, and she said it was fine, saying that she'd lived in Rome for the last few years, but he just said 'yep', and kept talking to her like she was a child. In the city, country people always get talked to like they should be home before dark.

Sally was used to it, used to this conversation, she'd had it a thousand times. But she had something important to find out, so when this chatty barman started telling her about the covered walkway to the Opera House, she cut right across him.

__ I'm looking for some one.__

9. **Swimming with sharks.** _'Without Trace.' _
So what's he look like.

His name is James. About five foot five-ish, dark hair, down to his elbows, he's twenty six.

Yep.

He's a spunk. I'm his sister. No, he's a real stunner. I want to get in contact with him.

So do I. Well you tell me where he's living. I want to meet him.

They both laughed. He poured the beer from the bottle for her in an over attentive manner.

Thanks.

What happened, what do you want him for? You might be a debt collector for all I know.

Well I never thought of that, I suppose people are reluctant to talk to strangers.

You bet sweetheart. Its a paranoid old town you know, specially round this strip. You may find this spunky little brunette of yours hard to find.

Look he lives with someone over in Burton Street, and there's no-one there, there hasn't been for two days and I thought he may come here, and you might know him, he's probably gone away for a few days.

Well, he may come here, and I might know him. You know about this place.

She waited a moment. The barman smiled, waved his hand at the bar, to fill in the awkward pause. Her face twitched a little, it was back to the retarded country person conversation.

9. Swimming with sharks. 'Without Trace.'
Oh Christ yes, of course, it's a gay bar, that's why I came here for God's sake. My brother is gay.

Thank God, I thought for a while, when you said you had come from Narrandera, I thought Oh Christ, this one doesn't know what she's in for, up from the country, and in this sleaze pit. Looking for her brother, probably her old boyfriend who's done a runner, disappeared, without trace, and here she is, not knowing he was queer. That's tough territory, sweetness, people take to the old gas pipe on that one.

Sally drank the last of the Heineken and ordered another by waving the bottle at him. No use in getting angry with the patronage, she thought, no use in telling this jumped up prick to get lost, not at this point. She looked at this hyperactive man in his late twenties, with his hair jelled and cut close to the scalp and thought, 'you'll keep, sweetness'.

He is my brother, and I would like to find him. It's a family matter, I guess it sounds sinister, but it's not. I haven't seen him in a couple of years, like I said I've been overseas, I work for the World Bank, and I come back for a holiday and found all this crap had blown up at home. I want to see him.

Sally ran out breath. The beer had brought her out in a heavy sweat that felt cold against the Sydney heat. The barman reached over, and touched her hand, to indicate he had another customer, and that he would be back in a few moments.

She watched him pour a couple of drinks, wine and soda. He had a quite manic, high speed style. He had a way of placing the drinks and snapping the money from the customer. He pulled the note a few times to straighten it, grabbed at the open drawer of the till and then slapped the change down, hard onto the counter. It was quick and aggressive. He knew how to drag the dollars from a crowded bar.

Well I actually do not know the lad. I'm sure you're kosher, but really, I came from Brisbane a few weeks ago and I would not know him from Adam. Really. Its true.

9. Swimming with sharks. 'Without Trace.'
He spoke slowly and Sally realised that he was, like herself, telling the truth. Like her, his story was improbable, but true. She smirked, then touched his hand.

__ Brissy. Bloody lot of good you are.

His face creased in amusement and he looked to the ceiling.

__ Have the drink on the house, I love you. The situation is now, altogether different. We've got to find this lost brunette.

But there was not much more to say. The Brisbane barman had nothing more to add and so Sally got no closer to her brother. She only had the address, no phone number and contact between them had been somewhat distant for the last twelve months. Sally couldn't quite believe that her parents could have cut him off so bluntly. She had returned home, to Narrandera, to find her brother dispossessed. It was a family row of enormous, but ridiculous proportions.

She finished the drink and walked back onto the street. The wind had come up and gusts of dusty humidity blew all around her. The back of her neck felt damp and sticky. The collar of her cotton floral dress rubbed against her moist skin. Where ever she had perspired felt cold and damp each time the wind came.

For the fourth time she wandered around to Burton Street, to see if her brother had returned. It seemed a somewhat futile vigil, yet she had allocated a few days to get in contact with him, so in the middle of the day she went shopping, or visited a friend for lunch. Each morning, and again briefly, in the evening, she dropped back to check if he had returned. She didn't know how else to do it.

Sally was not going to panic, although her anxiety was this. In a week she would be back in Rome, and this would all have to be resolved by the mail. Things always got screwed up when you wrote them down. It was like talking underwater.

At the corner of Crown Street she crossed through the solid stream of North Shore bound traffic. The line of cars was completely still. As she walked past a cream Falcon she heard PM on the radio.
The two beers had made everything brighter, the cream duco was almost yellow against the brown vinyl of the car seats. The driver was a young man, in a sweaty shirt with the tie pulled open. At the back window was a small swing sign that said ' Beware, baby on board '.

At Burton Street Sally took up her usual spot, on the fence, and pulled out her book to rewrite the note to James. She wanted to keep it fresh, as though she had only just dropped in.

__ Hi Babe.

As she began to write someone grabbed her arm and she jumped. It was straight back to Narrandera, back to the teasing brother who always, just as they were going to church, told her to shave under arms. He had short hair and a white T shirt. The easiness between them remained. They kissed and talked.

There were explanations to make, and gaps to fill in. He had been away for a few days, he was just sharing the house with someone else, it was not a relationship as Sally had thought.

James did not write a lot, just now and again, so she had missed out on all the detail of the last few years. She had known he was gay, they had talked about it a bit, but never in great detail.

They went into the small cottage, not realising that they had talked for twenty minutes in the front garden. The house was a tiny dark terrace, but it had bright kitchen, like a little theatre set, at the end of the hallway. James found a chair for Sally and gave her a glass of beer.

Sally looked at him directly.

__ James I've just got up from Narrandera, they're getting worse you know, they are really off the wall on this one. When will we get to see our real parents?

9. Swimming with sharks. 'Without Trace.'
James smiled at this old joke. It was a childhood favourite, to ease the difficulties of being Italian in Narrandera. They told each other that they were adopted twins, and that their new Italian parents had dyed their hair, to cover up the shame of it all. They never believed their mother when she said English names were pretty and soft. They invented rich fantasies and intricate plots to fill out this scenario.

Like I told you, in first class, James and Sally are our real names, they had to stick with them as part of the deal, with the Church of England minister who sold us to Dad. Another drink?

That’s right Jamie, we are off-cuts from the white slave trade. No more grog honey, in this heat I’ll fall over soon. I think he was a whisky priest myself.

James opened another can. Sally asked for the bathroom, throwing off her shoes as she got up, to make the walk easier. Her face felt greasy, and she wanted to wash her hands and forehead.

While she was away he looked at her bag. He wanted to look inside, see what she carried around with her. He had an irresistible desire to open it, or even, just to touch it. But he was frightened of being caught, of having to admit this deep curiosity in the bits and pieces of his sister.

She returned and accepted the beer offer.

How’s Rome.

Oh it’s fantastic, you must come over, it’s really great to live there, forget the traffic here, Rome is a nightmare. You can stay with me, and I know lots of people, and you’ll be able speak to them, really our Italian is not too bad I found out. Take you a while to get the feel of how they speak it over there, but you’ll be OK.

She spoke in an excited rush, no gaps, no time for James to answer. He went to the fridge as she talked, to get more beer. She followed him with her eyes, he poured the beer carefully, to make sure he was neat and didn’t spill any.

9. Swimming with sharks. ‘Without Trace.’
The room was stuffy so he opened the back door, to let the breeze came through. The neighbour's cat was asleep in the shade of the side wall, its black fur dusty and its small pink tongue protruding a little.

---

And so what are you going to do about the folks.

---

Why? I have resolved everything. They're the ones that need a bit of resolution in their lives. I'm not going to stir all that crap up again.

---

I mean, Jamie, you have to resolve it.

When he was fifteen, she had told him all about treating girls correctly. Don't try to touch their breasts, she would say. Girls hate it, she told him. James never asked for this advice it just became the main topic of conversation, anytime that Sally felt was appropriate. For some reason she usually felt that out the back at grandmas, on a Sunday after lunch, was a good time to tell James these things.

Sometimes Sally told him about her friend, Cathy, who was too fresh with the boys. Cathy let them touch her in all sorts of unhealthy places, and she had seen his 'thing'. There were measurements and descriptions, procedures and safety precautions. Sally told it all to James, in broken whispers, a bit here and there, never the whole story at once. All through these lessons in life their grandparents snoozed in the sun, the canvass of their folding chairs spread taut, beneath the weight of their old Mediterranean bodies.

He looked at her now, here in his kitchen, dressed in an expensive summer dress from Rome, telling him, in the same tedious detail, how to be a well adjusted homosexual.

---

Well I think that time is short and you have to sort this stuff out, I mean it's just baggage, you know what they say, 'Leave the bags at the station'. I did a course with the bank in that stuff, some American jerk told us a whole load of new age crap, but along the way he made some sense. Unresolved conflict, Lord, it kills you, heart attack, cancer and all the rest. It's all tied up.

---

9. Swimming with sharks. 'Without Trace.'
James opened the drawer of the cabinet and found a packet of Winston cigarettes, he lit one, the first one for a while, then he began talking again.

— Would you like to see if my socks are neatly placed in the wardrobe, perhaps you could rearrange them for me. I mean, they are probably facing all sorts of different directions.

Sally took a cigarette, but only as a diversion, something to do while her brother was talking.

— Oh don't be so defensive, you need to sort it out. I'll help. I know how you feel, I've been there too. I left home remember, pregnant, and no one knew, I've dealt with them.

— I know Sally, but there's a difference.

— Jamie, you miss the point, you always dodge the issue.

— Sal. Please.

The cat woke up. They both drew on their cigarettes. The cat yawned, placed her head on the concrete again, and pulled her tongue in.

— Well really, what would you know about it.

— Look, I support you.

— Stick it, bossy boots. Would it ever cross your mind that I have resolved a lot of this stuff.

Sally smiled and reached for the ash tray. Her little brother was having a tantrum and she was waiting for it to run its course. Most of their childhood was spent like this, she reorganising his lax approach to life and he fighting against it all. For Sally, it was the battle of reason over immaturity. The pretty faced brother who got away with murder, who constantly skipped out on his responsibilities, had to be led, had to be looked after.
You know it was not easy being the oldest, James. You might consider the fact that your path was smoother because I made the hard yards before you. Think on it kid. I mean I'm off in a few days, I do not have to be involved, if that is what you want. On the other I am involved, I'm you're sister, and you are my only brother. I'm involved.

James turned to the cupboard, found a saucepan and filled it with water. He was starting to prepare dinner. He meticulously lit the gas, getting the flame the right height. Sally went on with a few more details, about how it was when she arrived in Sydney, alone and pregnant, due to start University in two weeks.

James took three brown onions and peeled them, throwing the skins into the keep-tidy. There was a way he had learnt, in a Chinese cooking class, of cutting up an onion in five slices. This method produced large but even pieces, not Italian looking, but he preferred them. He found a clove of garlic and sliced it into perfect yellow crescents, like nails clippings. Then he searched the fridge for the mince steak. He pulled out a cloudy plastic bag, instinctively he smelt inside it.

Sadly past its prime, just the way you like it kitten, come on puss, only the best topside mince for you, nicely aged.

James was mumbling to the cat. At the sound of the fridge opening she had run into the kitchen. The grubby cat was now walking around his legs in a complex, circular pattern.

Come on sweetness, you greedy little monster, come on lovely, my little pal, who loves and understands me, without fear or favour. Sink you teeth into this lot Ms cat breath.

Sally stopped talking a minute as he pushed past to feed the cat outside.

He returned to preparing the meal and she then began again, telling him about two of her friends in Rome, who were gay.

They're fabulous. I love them, Charles and Al, they're English and just so funny.
Hm.

Charles also works with the Bank, he's about fifty but doesn't look it.

James opened the tomato paste, he remembered his mother telling him that she spent a lot of time cooking so that she wouldn't have to listen too closely to her husband. James had learnt from her that cooking was an excellent diversion to a row. It explained why the worst family arguments, when the bickering was most savage, were accompanied by enormous, beautifully prepared meals.

He had come to associate his mother's best cooking with her most vitriolic asides. Just as the meal went down on the table she would begin, unable to divert her attention any longer from his father. It was a fine, guilt laden counter attack to the old man's nagging. She never yelled or spoke hysterically, just relentlessly. She sighed as she spoke, but she never sounded defeated.

While placing down the heavy plates of food, she would say.

Why is that I cook for such a man.

She would serve the kids first, looking up from time to time.

Come on Jamie, Sally, eat your dinner, why cook for a man who is sick in the head, why give him more strength, why do I feed that crazy man, Jamie eat it, eat it, I didn't cook for hours so you could play with it, don't waste it my lovely one.

Then, finally, with painstaking attention to detail, not failing to miss a single thing from the table, she would heap a large plate with food, and pass it to the madman himself.

He always took the plate gently. He would mumble.

eat that food you two monsters, your mother cooked it for you, crazy woman, why do think my brother wants us to join his business, so we can all go broke, its a good deal that's why, and you are too stupid to know that, because
you don't trust him. Sally don't pick at it, eat your mother's food, she didn't cook it for you to play with.

___ And Al is the most wonderful cook, he's a translator, very bright, you must come to Italy Jamie. You know what I think, you have been just floating along, you know how you float through things. You are very clever, if you want to be.

___ feel hungry madam?

___ Oh yes, watch the sauce its going to catch.

___ No, it is not going to catch, thanks, its ok, glass of wine?

___ I'll be pissed.

___ You are already.

___ Now...I'm ignoring that...when can you come to Rome?

___ I don't want to not just yet. I've got to finish my degree, then I have a few debts to pay off.

___ Lord you are a fool of man.

James drew a deep and obvious breath. He took a hand full of rigatoni and threw it into the boiling saucepan. A shower of hissing water covered the top of the stove. Then he spoke, loudly and slowly.

___ You are sick in the head, why do I cook for a crazy mad woman, who is sick in the head. Sick in the head, I am cooking for a sick in the head crazy mad woman.

Sally smiled, looked down and laughed. She turned back to him, becoming quiet and intense.

___ We are adopted you know, I mean, I realised that overseas, for certain. We are adopted.
James was still a bit overexcited.

Kidnapped more like it. I've never told you this, because I thought it might break your little heart, but I heard Mum say to Dad, 'Junee, you sick in the head man, you should have gone to Wagga to pick up those kids'.

Sally was giggling as he spoke. It was the pleasure of this childhood joke, always expanded and developed between them, a conspiracy that had lasted for years. Once their mother had overheard them, and a huge row had blown up. Sally remembered her tearful outrage at the very thought of it, 'how could you think such a thing'.

In this unfamiliar little kitchen, waiting for her brother to cook dinner, she ran her hand gently along the brown skin of her forearm. The delicate hair tickled as it sprang back into place.

We are English I reckon, quiet and fair haired, fond of bread and butter pudding, and prone to sunburn.

Oh yes, very definitely, without question. Sally, I've felt English for years.
I started this diary as a way of remembering the things that had happened to me over these last few years. It is not a dream diary, because I do not think that what happened to me can really be classed as dreams. That’s why I wanted to include the photographs, to somehow hold more of the detail of the experiences as they were happened.

So what is the big insight I’m going to offer to the careful reader? Unfortunately it is nothing I could run a weekend seminar on. You know, place a small advertisement in the Age and change the lives of all the eager searchers who could afford the money. Well the fact is there have been no saleable insights to date. Then again perhaps that is the insight; I’m a lousy business man.

I thought at one stage I should confide in my editor. However that was really out of the question. Reporters do go under fairly regularly with the stress of work, not to mention the knowledge that Daren Hinch earns as much in a week as most reporters earn in a year. So I did not want to show any weakness, any suggestion that I was on the verge of an N.B. I wanted to keep it all to myself. After all it was not the stuff of light conversation.

Actually I got on well with George Whiting, my editor. We both had keys to each others places in case we got locked out. Our greatest common ground was an obsessive concern with small inconsequential details. How he ever became an editor is hard to know. He agreed that it was an unlikely profession for a chronic worrier. He liked to point out that his chiropractor had advised that it was a common source of back trouble in the community; being in an unlikely job that is.

On the telephone George was usually a bully. He had long ago mastered the power of the voice at the other end of the line. In the office he fluctuated between cruel sarcasm and indulgent benevolence. He was definitely a person who you were
pleased to count as a friend, for there was little peace if you were regarded as an enemy.

For some years he had been running hate files on dozens of politicians, business people and any one he considered shady. Sometimes going up in the lift he would turn to me, blank faced and in a steady calm voice give a detailed account of how much some bagman was dropping at a Solicitor's office in Collins Street. He would have all the names and amounts.

George loved to first glance at his watch and then begin the rundown.

— Well, he'll being dropping ten large ones about now. Good isn't it. I mean good for them that I cannot print the story and good for the community, 'cause they won't have the additional worry of knowing that the bugger who was on TV last night moaning about the road toll has a part time job as a bagman. Yes it's excellent all around. I feel that quite strongly. You know that chlorine is still cloudy in the pool. I'm frankly sick to death of Clark Rubber and their attitude to the customer. You buy a pool off them 'cause they have a national chain of stores and you think they might just have a clue about the whole business but you find after you filled your backyard with thousands and thousands of litres of water that they don't know how to make it clear. Experts at cloudy pools but somewhat remiss when it comes to clean sparkling pools that people would want to swim in. I ask: who wants to swim in something that looks like lime flummery. Not pleasant but as the adolescent store manager pointed out, it is hygienic. Great at least we don't have catch legionaries as well as swim in the foul looking thing.

George saved the most astounding rumours for the walk to the car park. As we descended the draughty concrete stars to level four, where his car was kept, he would assume his blank expression and in sotto voce tones expand on who had recently been threatened with toe removal or finger breaking. This worried me as the stairs had concert hall acoustics. And a lot of solicitors parked there.

Well, in short, I evolved a lifestyle that accommodated these departures into the ether. Any vagueness or remoteness on my behalf was taken by George to be the result my continual failure to consult his chiropractor, Leslie. I had enough on my plate. The last thing I needed was Leslie's knowing hands realigning my back
while his hyperactive imagination was realigning my life. I had seen his business card and it was enough, the man was a charlatan.

The first time I travelled, as they call it, there was no warning. A very strange experience. I had just watched the 7.30 Report, I always watch it on Fridays, and was thinking about home loans. They are often on the news these days. I don't recall how this happened in any great detail but I just sort of fell asleep. That's not really the best explanation.

There are lots of explanations for what has happened to me, mostly they call it astral travelling, even if they think you made it all up to get some attention or make some money. (Frankly, I was not driven by those motivations, although they often crossed my mind).

Anyway I was just in the lounge room when I experienced this overwhelming sense of lightness. As though I was a scrap of paper being blown around. I was not frightened as it was happening, after all it was very pleasant.

I realised I had no body pretty early on. I had caught a glimpse of myself on the lounge, curled up as though I was fast asleep. I looked deeply calm, but then again I had never seen myself asleep before. Of course it was very peculiar, but there was also a sense of security and peace. The worry of coming back or not did not seem to matter, I just knew I would be all right.

I only caught a glimpse of myself. I suppose that made me feel more relaxed. After all, I often have dreams where I fall asleep without realising. In my dream I see the room as it was while I was lying awake. It's not a particularly nice dream as I usually become aware of someone in the room with me. I struggle to get up, then to wake up. It's my anxiety dream. We all have them.

So I just looked down and moved on. The sensation changed from a floating feeling to a quite distinct thrust of speed. I was moving across a large space. It was not the sky or my room, it was just a space.

I had the sensation of moving along a hallway like a draft. This hallway was painted a light driftwood and had those very plain skirting boards. I just
remember just blowing through it, just above the carpet. I could feel the texture of the carpet pile, although I could not remember the colour.

These trips were strange like that. Sometimes I took in all sorts of details, other times I came back with a very selective memory of what had happened. In fact, the only thing I clearly remember was the driftwood wall, cement render not plaster, and those narrow skirting boards, about three inches high with a simple rounded edge. The whole thing lasted about a minute. Well I thought that but when I returned I was agitated.

It took time to come down. Of course I could not work anything out, I was exhausted. The most alarming thing was to find the Arts Program was on, Peter Ross was talking to a large Frenchman who had known Maria Callas. Now that meant that I had been away at least a day. I just stretched out on the lounge again and slept properly for an hour or so. This time when I woke I felt calmer, but still confused and exhausted. Still I found enough energy to wash my face and crawl into my real bed.

The following morning I awoke, starving and feeling just fine. The night's rest had given me some distance on what had happened. At least I had lost that terrible urgency that overcame me when I first returned.
Two.

On Monday I went to work as usual and was able to pretend that it may not have happened. I know this description sounds all over the place but that's the only way I can explain it all.

Nothing more occurred for weeks. It actually made me quite apprehensive as I never knew when it might happen again. I could not tell anyone. It was the sort of thing you keep quiet on. Unless you wanted one of those round the table conversations where everyone tells their favourite supernatural story. You know the type of thing. Someone's mother (who lived in the Blue Mountains, and was on holiday with their cousins at Hurstville), knew when the Jap submarine bombed Double Bay, hours before anyone in Double Bay.

Those sorts of conversations actually drive me crazy. Which makes it rather strange for me to have had these sort of experiences. Still, I did not let myself get lost in those endless reveries of self examination, you know, the 'why me's'. It was so unexpected and mysterious that I did not even give it much rational thought. It was the shock I suppose. You do not ask the question 'why me' during the experience of cutting your finger. There is not time for considerations such as 'me as victim again', or 'the nature of predetermination, free will and the revelation of Karma in your life'. It takes milliseconds to get right through to the bone. Somehow the knife was still travelling, so to speak.

Real time was all over the place. A fact which really worried me since I had recently read an article on pre-senile dementia in New Idea. I seemed to be stacking up a few too many danger signs. Anyway the next time it happened was wonderful. It convinced me that nobody should be told. Only recently have I revised that opinion a little.

I was on the train to work, lost in my thoughts, when I felt the carriage pull away from the station. It was as though I took off. It just shot me forward,
through the length of the train. It felt fantastic, like I was a neutrino, moving with effortless power. I felt that small; subatomic.

This space I moved through was the most delicate creamy colour, very warm and close around me. As I moved even faster it dimmed to a deep mushroom colour. Gradually it darkened to a point where I lost all sensation of light. I was just moving. I returned effortlessly to my body in the train. There was no fear reaction this time, just a deep sense of calm. I just looked up to see the blurred walls of the end of the station as we pulled into the tunnel.

I smiled as I realised it had lasted only a few seconds; and no one had noticed I had been gone.
Three.

These departures became more frequent, about twice a week sometimes, but then there would be periods of up to a month when nothing happened. I came to welcome them. Although that is not to say they were all pleasant.

I was on the bus from Sydney to Melbourne. We had just left the dinner stop at Goulburn, one of Australia’s least attractive ribbon development towns. The bus drove off into the night along the relentless Hume Highway. I was watching the on-bus video, which was situated at the front of the bus, just to the left of the driver. I don’t know if anyone else was watching, but most of the reading lights were turned off. It was Bill Cosby Live, I could not detect any real laughter, although the whole bus was filled with the studio audience’s guffaws and giggles.

As I watched the small bluish screen I felt the process beginning. I would look up to see Bill telling me long anecdotes about his family, but my attention was also being drawn by the dark countryside shooting past the window. I would move between these two compelling views.

Then, without any control over the matter, I just felt myself move along the aisle of the bus. I could see the lady in front of me shift to a more comfortable position. I passed by the driver as he lent back in his seat and scratched a small reddened swelling at the back of his neck, just above the collar line and moved out to the very front of the coach, somewhere close to the headlights.

It was extremely pleasant to watch the road race past. Flicks of the bright broken lane division blurred in a steady stream, rhythmic and constant. I noticed the headlight rim. It was clean, neatly secured with one small Phillip’s head screw. I would have been happy to stay here for a while but I just blew off; bodiless of course.
I just drifted and was dispersed, not unlike the blue/grey breath of a chain smoker as it seeps between his/her teeth, to be lost into the atmosphere. I felt subatomic, like a photon, or an electron. Perhaps even a neutrino: the smallest known particle. (It is small beyond imagining.)

I moved through a soft coloured zone. It was a very gentle transition, I was moving effortlessly between the layers of my travels, discovering the wormholes in the cosmos that a very conventional scientist by the commonplace name of Mr Wheeler spoke of. These are strange spaces in the quantum foam that interconnect all the regions of space time. (Well that is what I read somewhere, a long time after I had started to have these experiences). I am still unsure of what it all means but there is some comfort in the fact that quantum physics and the crazies of the astral travel block agree on one thing: you can move between time and space.

So I slowly came out of this tastefully coloured zone, to find myself in a long institutional building. There was a long row of taps over a concrete trough. The taps were dirty brass and some of them dripped into the long shiny line of water that ran gently to the drain. The building had a wall of blue timber slats and a concrete floor. I felt very anxious.

This feeling increased to the point where, for the first time I can remember for ages I felt confused and frightened. It was an emptiness that overcame me. I felt that cold despair that makes the attention latch onto any stray detail as a distraction. I found myself looking at the taps and the grubby concrete floor; it seemed to last a long time.

A woman walked past in a camel hair coat. She stopped at the building, maybe she heard them dripping or just noticed them as she passed, but she paused, then came in and turned all of them firmly. With a chuckle of delight at her own obsessiveness she turned to her companion, following a few steps behind. She spoke in a soft, self deprecating way, intimate but amused.

_ I can’t stand dripping taps. Shocking; isn’t it._

They both laughed and walked on, out of view. I wanted to follow, but was held for a long time.

10. The Daybooks of Eddy Avenue.
At last I was off again, flying through a large camphor laurel tree. Seems crazy I know, one minute I'm watching Bill Cosby from half way down a coach on the way to Melbourne and then I'm off in the dappled foliage of an enormous tree, on a sunny morning, somewhere I cannot place. Well that is what these journeys were all about. Strange mixtures of good and bad experiences, excursions to mystery locations without warning.

Actually Ansett used to offer a very cheap price on what they called "Mystery Flights". I am not sure how it all went, but they do not seem to have them now. Apparently you just turned up at the airport and waited till they handed you a ticket. Could be anywhere from Roma, Queensland to Orange, NSW, and you just went. Well I suppose that was very new age of them because that is what these experiences were like. The important difference being that I never planned to go anywhere. It all just happened.

Still, it was a great relief to have escaped the dreadful little building with it's dripping taps and overwhelming sense of despair, emptiness, and all that sort of depressive stuff. I was off again, as I said, somewhere in the ample branches of a camphor laurel tree, moving like a panavision camera on a large budget movie, gliding effortlessly through the mottled yellow and green of the dense leaves. I just loved it. They slipped past me gradually increased in speed till they became a blur. It was very cinematic at this point, and I was indulging the delight of participating in the production.

Then I lost control, I was being taken somewhere again. I felt that rush of molecular lightness as I was thrown into a warm space. I had no body of course but I felt the warmth, although there was no sensation of colour. I was now becoming aware of the intermediary zones. They had particular qualities, sometimes it was a colour, or perhaps a feeling, but always I was alone. Hidden within a, space or strata, that was available only to me. At times I was locked into these zones for long periods, but usually it was momentary. This time I stayed a while longer than usual, and felt quite reluctant to move.

Just what all these things really meant, I don't know. I let them happen without too much deep analysis. When I did arrive at some sort of explanation it always turned into a moralistic lesson in life that I would have preferred to avoid. There
seemed no point to try to fit it all into a scheme of this means that and so on. I had always been smugly amused by those Reader's Digest explanations of dreams that give climbing stairs a very particular meaning as against turning up to work in your pyjamas. In fact the greater bulk of new age insights, cures and philosophies had been pretty much lost on me. In the company of my friends, with their dream diaries and Dr Bach Flower Cures, it was generally agreed that if I just kept my "smart Alec remarks" to myself, it would be easier on everyone. This of course was the hardest privation to bear. So how could I tell my friends, who knew I had little time for crystals and homoeopathy, that I had spent the weekend in a soft mushroom coloured space, whizzing around like an electron.

There are no indicators to help me say how long I spent in this warm, comforting zone, other than the sense of having paused for an unusually long time. I was not so reluctant then when I felt myself gradually emerging into another space. I say emerge because that is how it felt. Like I was an image on a screen being faded up to full brightness.

This time I felt I had sort a physical presence, but I was still not completely within my body. I was walking through a restaurant, although each time I looked down my feet somehow ducked out of view. I could feel them, sensing the snug fit of my socks inside the tightly laced shoes. The closest description of this strange perception is this. It was like that feeling you have when some one just moves out of sight. You knew they were there but when you turned to look they had gone. It is a rather frustrating feeling. Finally I had a longer glimpse of myself it was clearly apparent that I was totally two dimensional.

In my reading about other people's astral travels the more colourful descriptions were from people who found themselves as Negroes surrounded by Arabs, or some other exotic past life experience. Not for me it seemed. I was a two dimensional man whose feet had a tendency to duck out of sight each time he looked for them. Somehow I could sense certain details about my appearance. I was wearing a very good suit (it was by Zenga), a delicate charcoal grey flannel suit, with fine hand stitched lapels. As to the shirt, it was an Italian cotton by Piero Gesualdi, as was the tie. But the exact colours of the shirt and tie were not clear.
As I strayed into the restaurant nobody really noticed me. I could not tell if I
was visible to them till a waiter, a small, young man with an intense but
delicately shaped face stepped aside to let me pass. He smiled in that distracted
way that busy waiters sometimes do. As he passed me I felt a rush of
exasperation, it was a brief feeling that subsided as I moved into the dining area.
Finding an empty table I sat down. The table was set with a starched white linen
cloth, the salt and pepper containers were colourful art deco pieces, not
expensive, and as I looked around me I could see that each table had a different
setting. At the centre was a small vase of violets. My chair was a beech
Bentwood, thankfully still new so that it was still firm to sit on. (In time they
all develop that disconcerting twisting movement in the frame when even the
lightest person sits in them).

The restaurant had an open feel to it, with a soft light coming through the glass
wall that separated the eating area from the garden. It was a long unfinished
garden piled with terracotta tiles and bags of sand, some of which had fallen and
spilt. My table was deep in the room. I looked to the garden. The neat
arrangement of people and tables were mirrored as a blurred mix of highlight and
shadow in the polished cork floor.

The lunch crowd was moving in from the surrounding offices. I watched as the
waiter adeptly ran the obstacle race of tables and overdressed people. Each time
he came close I could sense his irritation and tiredness, although very little of
that showed on his face. Perhaps it was just a busy day, but the same intuition
told me he had the edge of a hangover to deal with as well. So it amazed me to
see the patience he showed to the relaxed puggy men as they dawdled through
their menus, smiling egregiously to one another as they prolonged the decision
making process with banal quips and self important asides. The waiter skilfully
hurried them up, organising their courses and correcting their Italian
pronunciation by example.

At the table next to me a couple were sitting circumspectly, talking quietly while
they slowly ate their entrees. The food was so carefully arranged that I was a
little disturbed to see them slice and eat it. They ate in with a passionless,
steady manner, as though the lunch was an obligation, not unpleasant but
nonetheless, uneventful. But then it's hard to know, after all some couples are
reserved and confidential in restaurants.

10. The Daybooks of Eddy Avenue.
The woman was dressed in a black cotton Bomber jacket, jeans and brown lace up brogue shoes that were stitched in a hectic parody of the traditional English style. She was having pickled octopus with finely sliced raw red cabbage. The man was in black jeans and delicate grey rayon shirt. He was eating artichoke hearts, sliced in perfect cross sections and doused in a dressing of virgin olive oil and lemon juice. With great skill they ate small amounts, stopping to talk from time to time.

It was so strange, I could not quite hear them, although it seemed to be a faltering, stop start conversation over some tedious problem. They were drinking an imported wine, a pale yellow Frascati. I had the most unnerving sensation as I watched them eat. I could taste everything they had in their mouths. The octopus was sharp in flavour, having the same crisp texture as the cabbage. The artichokes were so delicately flavoured with the oil that I preferred his food to hers. The wine seemed quite tart and unpleasant but I needed it to clear the flavours that insistently filled my mouth.

At times I could see the very closest details of the octopus tentacles. They were coloured a purple/pink on the outside but at the centres of the suckers, and just under the skin, they were a milky white. As the woman cut through each segment it would slip a little on the plate. She had to press firmly to ensure all was kept in control. Which of course, it all was.

I felt a wave of nausea run through me, although it became more like a sense of panic. This desperate feeling would rise and fall unpredictable, subsiding mostly to a background haze of urgency, as though at any time some ghastly thing was going to happen. Nothing in either of those faces showed any such emotion. There was just a practised distance in their manner. I wanted to leave, despite the food. I had had enough of the place, but as is often the case with these journeys, I had no control over the matter.

When I looked at the table I caught an image of my hand resting on the white cloth. I was fascinated, but not surprised to see it was still quite two dimensional. There was no form or roundness to it. From some angles it appeared only as a thin black line but as I moved it would appear again, catching the light in broad highlight that showed it was perfectly smooth, like vinyl. I looked away to the

10. The Daybooks of Eddy Avenue.
table on the other side of me. It was empty with the remains of the meal waiting to be cleared. My mouth was filled with the taste of a heavy sauce and I could feel the soapy texture of cold, congealed fat.

At last I was able to move. Slowly I stood and walked towards the door. Half way across the same beleaguered waiter stepped aside for me, catching my eye he gave me a direct smile of farewell, as though I was an old valued client, or even someone he knew quite well. It was an ambiguous, momentary recognition of my existence, for he quickly moved away to place a large plate of tiny petit fours on the businessmen's table. As I walked up the stairs to the street my mouth was filled with a rich chocolate and hazelnut flavour, sweet and gritty.

The street was hard to see as the glare of the overcast sky became unbearable, a blue/white intensity of light that enveloped me. I was lifted through to a soft steely grey that gradually darkened. I returned to find my overcoat, which I was using as a blanket, had slipped to the floor and that the entire bus was quiet except for a couple directly behind me who were whispering intimately, conspiratorially and unbeknown to them, quite audibly.

I could feel a shaft of pain that ran in a diagonal from left shoulder to right hip. It felt as though I had been twisted by some malicious giant, the line of pain indicating where my body had creased. I had returned to the austere coach interior, with it's inhospitable seats and crazy mix of passengers. Still I was glad to settle back into it; I could still taste the heavy sweetness of the petit fours.
Four.

I returned home from the Film Festival, feeling quite restless after the night of Polish films, I was considering what was in the fridge to eat. Rage was beginning it's marathon broadcast of video clips, as usual, starting with the feature section. Famous and often unlikely duos were belting out their big hits. George Michael and the Queen of Soul, Annie Lennox and the Queen of Soul and those posturing iguanas of pop music, Neil Diamond and Barbara Streisand, who definitely is not the Queen of Soul. It was a refreshing change from the hours of muffled conversations and stuffy train rides that had filled the Polish film.

I was running over in my mind something that I had read earlier in the day. Apparently this particular critic was claiming that film was one the most resistant art making areas to the forces of Post Modern art practice. I was reserving judgement.

The famous duos section finished and the androgynous rubber face of Prince appeared. He was rolling his enormous brown eyes at me when I slipped into the ether. His face had filled the screen of my Thorn Portable. It is a face still showing some remnants of it's adolescent beauty, but that has lately given way to a considerably more worldly sensuality. No, I did not go down the tube Myra Breckonridge style, I just slipped into a zone of pixilated mottle; red, blue and green flecks jiggled around me at enormous speed, so fast in fact their edges were blurred. Momentarily they would join up and I would see yellow, turquoise and pink shapes.

There was no image or form to these shapes, just a galaxy of hyperactive colours, and I was moving through them, loving it. They were ecstatic, so unbridled in their movement I of course wanted to stay in this chaotic zone, but I could sense the slowing of the shapes. Over a period of five minutes I suppose, anyway it was quite a while, they slowed right down and drained of colour till they were like large shreds of pastel tissue paper, blowing around me. They just
swirled up and around growing weaker with each circuit, till I finally found myself standing on a curved section of stainless steel.

I noticed that this steel floor met up with an enormous white enamel wall. At the edge they were joined by a thick rubber seal. I felt secure, sizeless, bodiless and somewhat let down at leaving the pixilated zones. Then I felt myself move slowly, I had that observational frame of mind, unworried by the atmosphere around me. I found this state let me see things, be they fearful or ecstatic, without response. I just noticed the detail of the scene, even the emotional detail but I was removed from it, detached and unaffected by it. I was simply a presence.

So I slipped along the stainless steel platform to find the whole view of a supermarket fridge. I moved across the labels of the cheeses and milk cartons, I was sizeless but amongst them. I observed the rough wax collar that fringed the tops of the milk cartons and the deep impressions left by the date stamp on the soft plastic packs of cheese.

I moved out along the corridor to the check-out, passing like a bar code across the ruby laser price reader, I watched as the crowds of shoppers stuffed their bags and jeeps with supplies. I could feel the peculiar mix of urgency and boredom that filled the centre. I sensed but was unaffected by it.

Over the white trays of the delicatessen I passed above the fresh chicken livers, they were a deep bruised purple with a tight dry skin like cellophane. They sat in the tray, partly submerged in a shallow pool of their own seeping, dark juices. Sliced wedges of camembert formed rounded glaciers, the surfaces of which had a soft, yellowish translucency. Lines of featherless wings were arranged in neat rows, their fatty edges showing where they were cut from the bird. The fillets were a pale mushroom colour, white lines of creamy fat occasionally running with the grain of the muscle. One tray of chicken pieces was soaking in a marinade of soya sauce, barely visible the dismembered limbs and thighs were flecked with green chopped chives. Pressed meats were tightly regimented in lines, symmetrical displays of marbled pink and cream squares were stacked in pre-measured amounts. I noticed the olives were hidden in a cold brine that was covered by an oily patina that collected at the edges of the stainless steel containers. Fetta cheese was cut in clumsy blocks. Fragments that had broken
off while pieces were moved around, littered the cloudy liquid that they swam in. The prices marker was plunged deep into the largest slab, I could see that the spike of the marker had in fact opened a fault line.

I moved back to watch the salesperson, attentive but unoccupied, as he briskly reorganised the fresh pasta. It was soft and dusty with a granular flour. It lay flaccidly in haphazard mounds. He re-ordered it neatly, carefully lifting the wormy strings of vermicelli into a tight coils. Tagliatelli and gnocci were just given an insistent shake to spread them evenly but the stuffed ravioli was carefully rearranged to prevent it bunching at the end of the tray. After this knowing maintenance the whole display looked refreshed.

The salesperson had managed to reduce the number of trays, and returned the leftovers to the preparation area. After he placed them on the clean bench, just out of sight of the customer, he turned his attention to the cold meats.

I could not smell or taste any of this landscape of food, nor could I discern any emotion or feeling from the salesperson. He was as unknowable as the trays of pickled and preserved foods.

What I did notice were the details of things, the very close texture and surface details of everything. I could see the small dried stalk of the black olives as clearly as I could see the small line of flaking skin that ran from the centre of the salesperson's right eyebrow to the point at which the eyebrow finished, at the edge of his temple. I could not sense if he felt any irritation from this minor rash, but I did see him rub the area as he was moving over to rationalise the cold meats. So I suspect it was annoying; but then again he may have been just bored.

I moved over the polished surface of the scales, wondering of course if the cherry red digits registered anything, but I was not staying long. In an unexpectedly energetic move I passed back over the whole display, sweeping gently across the salesperson's forehead, even passing through the blond frayed edges of his hair, to shoot straight into a dark hole, one of thousands, in the acoustic tile ceiling. I was gone, lost to a luxurious electric blue zone.

10. The Daybooks of Eddy Avenue.
Five.

I was walking along Swanston Street. It was late in the day and the heavy peak hour traffic of cars and people were battling their way across the intersection. As I approached La Trobe Street I felt myself settle into the pavement. I drifted down about half way, so that I had a view not only of the street, but also the underground railway station. It was as though I had taken on the architect's view, the cross section elevation of the world.

In the station I could see people walking down to the platforms, buying their tickets, taking the escalator and having themselves photographed in the instant photo-booth. On the station they waited in that bored way that commuters do, eating Cheezels and chocolate or smoking. Above I could see the hectic stream of cars and trams. I was still walking, well sort of, with the deluge of people crossing. There was a whole layering activity before me. I am not sure how long all this took to happen, but by the time I had reached the other side of the street I was back to normal.

It was just so strange and unexpected, quite unlike the previous experiences. Mostly I was aware of the levels of the city. Sometimes I would zoom in on a detail. Someone on the street would throw away some litter, a cigarette butt or paper, and I would follow it down through the grate to the drain below. I could smell that sour fetid aroma of the storm water. At one point I could read the departure details on platform one, the Eltham train leaving in one minute. Across my forehead I felt that cool rush of air as the train gets close to the station. I looked up to a policeman in the middle of the road. By now I had crossed and was standing on the other footpath. Just how I got there without walking into anyone I do not know, but I looked to the policeman and I could see the tiny line of hairs that ran high on his cheek bones. They were very delicate, grading down to almost nothing on his temples, I could see quite clearly where his razor had shaved his beard smooth.
At that point I lost it. I was back with the crowds, seeing what was in clear view in front of them. I really wondered if anyone had noticed, or if my behaviour seemed strange. Still no one had said anything, and it all lasted so briefly.
Six.

I walked down the hallway of my house. I felt I knew it in detail, after all, it was only a tiny place and I had painted it very carefully. I was struck by the blotchiness of the sunlight as it was scattered across the doorway to the bathroom. It was changing, growing flecked and waving in an irregular pattern. The bright spots of light took on that mottled translucency of light through water. I had a drifting feeling. I was underwater in my own house. Now it would have been quite unnerving for someone who had not experienced what I had, but it was just another departure, albeit a little disturbing at first.

The hallway was a lime greenish tint, and I could see the light catch the slightly cloudy quality of the water that now filled my flat. Of course, I felt I was bodiless again, so no risk of drowning I thought. Far from any panic I was overwhelmed at the simple pleasure of the experience. My place is small, so to be able float around was a vast improvement. I felt like a fish, a large plate-like coral parrot fish. A first I just felt like this manifestation, moving in that elegant billowing fashion that tropical fish do when swimming against the currents.

I had always suffered back pain when I was overtired, so I noticed that my back now felt incredibly strong. I could arch elegantly, manoeuvring precisely with my fins.

The current was firm but I knew how to deal with it. The water was blood temperature, I felt no edge where my skin met with it, quite unlike the experience of swimming as a person. I was part of the water in a way I could not remember since I was a child, when the sheer excitement usually precluded any appreciation of the water temperature. The carpet pile though fine, was waving with the current. I moved over the light switch and down the battered moulding of the door jamb to nuzzle my small rounded mouth through the swaying fibres of my landlords brown nylon carpet.
It sounds really awful thing to do but it seemed rather pleasant at the time. My right eye caught the glint of a small panel pin that I had dropped some time ago. It lay nestled deep in the carpet, tangled into the pile. I noticed that the point was sliced rather crudely, with a fringe of excess metal running along the edges of the sharpened end. Along the shaft were abrasions and cuts.

I turned sideways and propelled myself high into the hallway, then back to the lounge room. Everything was in place although as I moved over my desk some of the papers floated up in response. Everything was still, much easier to move around when you do not have to fight the water current. So I scooted across my bookshelf, the books were all in their places, pretty much as I had left them. I moved over to the window sill and looked out to the street but the visibility was too poor to make out very much detail.

The current seemed very strong out there so I avoided getting too close to the narrow opening of the window. Just outside the window the trees in my garden were bent over in a hectic, thrashing way that worried me. I thought rationally for a moment that it was just too dangerous out there for one so inexperienced. So I flicked my body in a sharp, energetic manner over the hanging light, back to the sunny area where my tapes were kept. The lights on the tape player were still on and I could hear Aretha Franklin belting out Freeway. I paused in fascination to watch the spools of the tape turn. I had never really seen them that close before.

Neither hot nor cold, I felt very free, safe from the Humboldt current outside. I could move as I wanted, rising and falling through the entire height of the room. There was a sense of abundant light, showing all the colours as bright, saturated with vibrant tones. I felt deeply at peace.

I gave a another sharp arch of my body and glided high towards the ceiling. My whole room was laid out. It was neat and orderly from this height, as though there was a reason for everything being in it's place. I floated right up till I felt my upper fin brush against the ceiling. Then I just dropped down, being drawn a little by the gentle movement of the current from the hallway I nestled into the soft, bloated surface of my sofa. I wriggled a little more and wedged myself between the cushions. From this relaxed position I was able to look out to my...
room. I was very relaxed and tired. I had that soporific feeling that overcomes you when the gas fire has been on for too long or when the bath water is too hot. I nestled deeper and fell into a sleepy pastel pink zone.
11. **Images of Manhood.**

In this section I have included the original introductory letter for the project, a series of short extracts from the interviews conducted and a selection of four photographs of the work. This material should provide a sense of the work as it was progressing.

There is not space to give the extracts room to 'breathe', however this selection will provide an insight into their anecdotal nature. I was very concerned to keep the 'voice' of the person intact as much as possible. In the excerpts here, there are five different people. The choice of material being varied, but necessarily a little arbitrary.

At the end of this chapter I enclose four photographs from that series.
Interview excerpts: a brief selection.

A part time job is something men don't do - you have to have a real job.

One day you'll get married.

As my parents said, 'you're not a good catch, what have you been doing for the last fifteen years'

I wanted to leave school at third form...be a motor mechanic...I loved cars, tinkering, playing driving...building model cars, and playing with my corgis and matchbox toys.

Short men are like tall women-they're the great comedy routine...there's a thing from the movie the Sunshine Boys where this old comic says 'some things are funny...cucumbers are funny, a loaf of bread is not funny'. As long as you've put these magic words, like cucumber, in the show people will laugh. I think it's the same with short men. People always laugh, especially next to a tall woman.

As a short man I've always been attracted to tall women.

The thing women often say about their men, their boyfriends, 'Oh I couldn't leave him, he'd never cope'.

My manhood? I don't think about it much.

The whole idea of manhood is very much under threat...its been found wanting.

I found being straight was more private than being gay.

I've got more girlfriends than boyfriends. I actually get on better with girls than boys.

We went swimming down to the river and up to the pub afterwards. They both, there were three of us, they both had beers and I ordered a gin and tonic and the barman, we were just sitting in the beer garden and he brought back the drinks and he plonked them on the table and just said, 'Who's got the lady's drink'.

11. Images of Manhood.
I thought I was twenty two or twenty three or twenty four for about ten years.
Then I found out I was forty.

The first fight was at school, when I jokingly said to a guy,
___ Yeah, I'll have you.
His friends heard me, and it escalated. He didn't want to fight and I didn't want
to fight him but we had to because everyone else said.
___ Oh it is true you're going to have one, after school?
You couldn't back out of it. I was quite lucky because he was relatively small.
We had a good circle around, a good show for everyone's money. You know they
were just cheering us on. Problem is the fight ended when I just swung my fist
sideways into his forehead and I broke my hand. After that I was left handed...I
was just hoping that a prefect would come and break it up...

I felt like a man when I was a kid.

Not many of my friends are interested in cars.

There's a much greater tradition of women talking personally between women.

I said I need to go to a funeral for a friend of mine who died of AIDS, and they
just said, ‘sure’.

Most older men have had pretty much harder lives, not having the benefits of
philosophising.

I don't know anything about making the moves. How do you establish anything.
It's still alien to me. I don't know what the hell you're got to do.

To all intents and purposes: she could have been the one.

It's curious that when you do that, you have a sexual experience that is
absolutely depersonalised. It's only bodies...it's electric because, like, there is
nothing else.

My attitude to women--I really don't think about it.
This a copy of the invitation to be part of the Manhood Project.
IMAGES OF MANHOOD

The visual representation of men has changed considerably over the last decade, not only are men represented as more emotional, they are also represented in a more overtly sexual manner. It may be said that the acceptable roles for men have been expanded.

This exhibition of photographs is planned to present a range of men, such as media personalities, church leaders, and other such high profile men, as well as people who may not be regarded as well known identities. These people will be photographed in a direct, documentary manner. The shots will not attempt to show the sitter's 'soul', but rather to record their public face.

It is important to note that the photographs are not intended to specifically play off one person against another. Although the people included may well be opposed on many issues concerning the representation of men, let alone the whole notion of manhood, they are in no way being 'set-up'. All participants are being approached in good faith.

The final exhibition will comprise about fifty photographs, with selected sections of texts from interviews done at the time of shooting. However no comments will be specifically identified with any particular photograph. So each person's remarks will not at any time be directly ascribed to them.

It is hoped to present the exhibition towards the middle of 1987 at a gallery in Sydney.
SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

I would like to photograph you in your home or workplace, and would of course be happy to fit into your timetable. The photography will take at least half an hour.

I will need you to sign a general release to cover the use of your photograph in this project. Details of this release can be made available before the day of shooting.

As this is an artistic/academic undertaking no payment can be made. Exhibition, travel and production costs will themselves be considerable.

Participants will receive an exhibition print, unframed, on the completion of the exhibition.

Several questions will be asked during the photography concerning general attitudes and ideas about being a man. Sections from that interview may be used as text within the exhibition, however no comments will be specifically identified with any particular person. So your comments will always remain anonymous.

I hope to complete shooting by January 1987, and will be in contact with you to arrange a suitable time.
I would like to document two examples of developmental work that were not included in the final submission. They were excluded for reasons of format and quality. They are of interest to this submission for they represent two areas for work beyond this submission. I am especially interested to undertake a series of large format still life images in black and white, during 1993. Perhaps the body series could be extended, further exploring the androgynous qualities of the subject.

In late 1991 I undertook a series of black and white photographs using a 10"/8" camera and studio lighting. The camera produces a negative 10"/8", capable of yielding a very high level of tonal gradation and richness in the final print.

The work was put aside as it was too dissimilar to the smaller formats used, certainly it was not possible to incorporate such a large image within the format of the final work. For me, the size of the camera also dictates a different rhythm to the photography, making it more slowly paced. However, other photographers have found the 'nature' of the format most suitable to their work, especially in the USA with the 'f 64 school', Ansel Adams, Edward Weston, Imogen Cunningham. Also, in Australia today, with the work of Les Walkling and Fiona Hall.

The imagery was concerned to explore the body, the same person being photographed in keeper of the secrets. I worked with the idea of a hand holding a photograph and with the canvass drop. I enclose an example from that series. It is interesting to note that the print enclosed is same size as the negative, which makes for certain problems in binding. However, it is of importance to include one of the ten photographs taken, regardless of the tight fit.
Earlier, in June 1988, I experimented with 35mm colour negative film, Kodacolor 1000. I chose the film as it produced a coarse grained result, due mainly to its high speed. While I found the images of interest, I decided to work only in black and white. There seemed to be stronger representation of the ideas in monochrome. I enclose two examples from that series.
13. Specifications of the final submission.

The journals comprise a six part, boxed collection, vertical format, 21cm/20cm.

An edition of three was produced, (numbered and signed).

The text pages are of acid free paper (100 gsm), Ingres Paper manufactured by Canson, France. The text was set on a Macintosh Computer using Microsoft Word 5, printed by an Stylewriter printer. The boxes were hand made to archival standards, by David Amos at York Design, Melbourne. They were lined in an original, marbled paper design, by Melbourne artist, Patrick Snelling.

Oriental fibre based photographic paper, manufactured in Japan, was chosen for the images, with both warm and cold tone papers being used. The images were toned with Kodak Rapid Selenium Toner to shift the image colour and provide an enhancement of the print life. All images were processed to produce good qualities of permanence.

I decided on this paper after testing several others, Kodak Polyprint, Kodak Elite, Ilford Multigrade Fibre, Agfa Brovira and Agfa Record Rapid. Oriental papers produced the most appealing range of tonal variation and colour control for my work. I have previously used the Agfa stock, (flight without wings), but have found Oriental warm toned papers to more evenly accept the Selenium toner. Agfa Neutol warm or cold tone developer was used to process the prints.

The film stock used, in most cases, was Kodak T MAX 3200 for the 35mm images and Kodak T MAX 100 for the 2½ square images. The film stock was processed in Kodak developers D-76 and T MAX Developer.
Summary of imagery presented in the journals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part</th>
<th>Details of Imagery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. stranger's kiss</td>
<td>Trains series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. flight without wings</td>
<td>Landscape series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. fluorescent light fills the room</td>
<td>Domestic details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. swimming with sharks</td>
<td>Landscape series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. no edge where my skin met the water</td>
<td>Domestic details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. keeper of the secrets</td>
<td>Sharks, person details</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 8. Conclusion.

The work, journals of a stranger: documents of a life, operates around a central concept; the metaphor of a life. Through the compilation of images, and text fragments, a structure is built. It is in fact, only the suggestion of a life. There is no systematic delineation of a person.

This document has dealt individually with the key supporting elements of the work -- personal writing, intimacy, gender, landscape representation and the use of journey as theme -- however, these fields should be understood as overlaying each other. They are not discrete ideas, and have only been separated to provide a more open and accessible analysis. I see no value in mystification, and for this reason I have chosen these clear vantage points.

In viewing the work we draw out the life of the stranger. As with our own lives, each revisiting of events re-creates the life lived. Of course, certain features remain unchanged, however, the nuance shifts. It is this constant, usually gentle, re-ordering of the evidence of a life that is the major concern of the work.

Like all diaries the work is paradoxical. Often diaries are both the proof of certain facts, and also, their refutation. Waugh removed the 'gay' years from his journals, and so ensured those few years would be forever seen as important to him. He could have hidden them more effectively by allowing them to remain. Georgiana McCrae's reserve spoke of the incredible duress under which she lived. This the process of interpretation, and we engage in it whenever we survey the evidence of a life. We always find proof to support our created life.

In fact, I have no clear-cut idea why either Waugh, or McCrae, acted as they did.

It is also important to understand that the work is not intended as riddle. It is open, and malleable: there are no secret twists implanted to aid the plot. Nor, is it intended as a complete life. This is a diary of inference and tonality, concerned with the shifting nuance of a period of time. It is the mapping of experience.
JOURNALS OF A STRANGER: DOCUMENTS OF A LIFE.

A written submission in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of

DOCTOR OF CREATIVE ARTS

from

THE UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

by

JOHN DAVID ROY STOREY BA

SCHOOL OF CREATIVE ARTS

1992
JOURNALS OF A STRANGER:
DOCUMENTS OF A LIFE.

Book Two.
Contents.

Book One.
Abstract. 4
Introduction. 5
1. Overview to the DCA program. 7
2. Contemporary Practice: Writing and Photography. 22
3. Diaries, Journals, Biographies: Evidence of a life. 49
4. Intimacy. 67
5. Gender. 87
6. Landscape. 102
7. Journey. 112
8. Exhibition Documentation. 126
9. Swimming with sharks: Nine Stories. 133
10. The Daybooks of Eddy Avenue. 201
11. Images of Manhood. 222
12. Tests in Large Format and Type-C Prints. 226
13 Specifications. 228
14 Conclusion. 230

Book Two.
Bibliography. 4
Illustrations. 20
Bibliography.

Personal Interviews.

Curator of Photography, National Gallery of Victoria.

Senior Executive, McPhee Gribble, publishers.

Duffy, Judy, April, 1992.
Second place winner of the 1991 Age Short Story Competition.

Author, A City in the Mind.

Publisher of Modern Writing.

Iremonger, John, April, 1992.
Director, Melbourne University Press.

Senior Lecturer, digital imaging, Rochester Institute of Technology.

Spearritt, Peter, April, 1992.
Director, National Centre for Research and Development in Australian Studies.

Photographer.
Books: Nonfiction.

Adelaide, Debra, ed., *A Bright and Fiery Troop: Australian Writers of the Nineteenth Century.*

Altman, Dennis, *AIDS and the New Puritanism.*

Arnold, John, ed., *The Imagined City: Melbourne in the Mind of its Writers.*

Translated by R. Howard.

Bauer, Arnold, ed., *Thomas Mann.*


Burnett, John, ed., *Useful Toil: Autobiographies of working people from the 1820s to the 1920s.*
Great Britain: Allen Lane, 1974.

Calle, Sophie, and Baudrillard, Jean, *Suite Ventienne / Please follow me.*

Carrier, David, *Principles of Art History Writing.*


Cockshut, A., Truth to life: The Art of Biography in the Nineteenth Century.  

Cohen, Lynne, Occupied Territory. Introduction by David Byrne.  

Connell, R., Gender and Power: Society, the Person and Sexual Politics.  

Cooper, Emmanuel, The Sexual Perspective: Homosexuality and Art in the Last 100 Years in the West.  


Davies, Alan, At Work and Play: Our Past in Pictures.  

Davies, Michael, ed., The Diaries of Evelyn Waugh.  

Davila, Juan and Foss, Paul, The Mutilated Pieta.  

Ecco, Umberto, Reflections on The Name of the Rose.  

Edelstein, Andrew, The Pop Sixties: A Personal and Irreverent Guide.  


Fleming, Peter, News from Tartary.  

Foster, Hal, Postmodern Culture.  

Frank, Robert, The Americans.  

Fry, Peter, Bluewater Australians: The Australian Experience in Ocean Sailing.  
Fry, Tony, *Spectacular Australia and Post-Modernism/Politics*.


Greer, Germaine, *The Obstacle Race: The Fortunes of Women Painters and their Work*.
Great Britain: Picador, 1981.


Hebdige, Dick, *Subculture: the Meaning of Style*.

Heyward, Michael, *Bill Henson*.
Australia: Pinacotheca, 1986.

Hill, P, and Cooper, Thomas, *Dialogue with Photography*.

Holland, P., Spence, J., Watney, S., eds., *Photography / Politics:Two*.

Hollingdale, R., *Thomas Mann*.

Hoy, Anne, *Fabrications: Staged, Altered, and Appropriated Photographs*.

Heyde, H., *Solitary in the Ranks: Lawrence of Arabia as airman and private soldier*.


Johnson, Brooks, *Photography Speaks: 66 Photographers on Their Art*.

Johnson, Robert, *Femininity Lost and Regained*.


Kruger, Barbara and Mariani, Phil, *Remaking History: Dia Art Foundation Discussions in Contemporary Culture, Number 4.*

Leiris, Michel, *Manhood: A Journey from Childhood into the Fierce Order of Virility.*
Translated by R. Howard.

Lhoman, Jr., W.T., *Deliberate Speed: The Origins of a Cultural Style in the American 1950s.*

Liddell, Robert, *Cavafy: a Biography.*


Miller, Jane, *Women Writing About Men.*


Morris, Meaghan, *The Pirate's Fiancée: Feminism, Reading Postmodernism.*

Newton, Gail, *Silver and Grey: Fifty Years of Australian Photography 1900 - 1950.*
Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1980.

by William Allingham,


[no publication details].


Raymond, Lilo, *Revealing Light: Photographs by Lilo Raymond.*  
Introduction by Mark Strand.  


Roth, Sanford and Roth, Belulah, *James Dean.*  


Smith, Bernard and Smith, Terry, *Australian Painting 1788-1990.*  


Spearritt, P., *The Sydney Harbour Bridge.*  

Spender, Dale, *Two Centuries of Australian Women Writers.*  

Squiers, Carol, *The Critical Image.*  

Fremantle: Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1900.


Sturrock, John, *Structuralism.*  
Szarkowski, John, *Photography Until Now.*


Weeks, Jeffery, *Coming Out: Homosexual Politics in Britain from the Nineteenth Century to the Present.*


Williams, John, *Into the Badlands: A Journey Through the American Dream.*

Australia: Angus and Robertson, 1988.
Books. Fiction.

Adiar, Gilbert, Love and Death on Long Island.
Bedford, Jean, Love Child.
Buford, Bill, Granta 27.
Camus, Albert, The Outsider.
Capote, Truman, In Cold Blood.
Carver, Raymond, Fires.
---, Elephant and other Stories.
Corris, Peter, Wet Graves.
---, The January Zone.
---, Pokerface.
---, 'Beverly Hills' Browning.
Coward, Noel, *Pomp and Circumstance.*

Crowley, Mart, *The Boys in the Band.*

Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy: Inferno.* Translated by Mark Musa,

---, *The Divine Comedy: Purgatory.* Translated by Dorothy L. Sayers,

---, *The Divine Comedy: Paradise.* Translated by Dorothy L. Sayers and
Barbara Reynolds,


---, *Personal Best 2: Stories and Statements by Australian Writers.*
Australia: Angus and Robertson, 1991.

Duffy, Judy, *Bad Mothers: Stories by Judy Duffy.*

---, ‘Photographs from Beneath the Surface’.

Friedman, Kinky, *When The Cat’s Away*

Gide, Andre, *The Immoralist.*


Jolley, Elizabeth, *The Well.*

---, *Milk and Honey*

Kerouac, Jack, *The Dharma Blues.*

---, *On The Road.*
Koch, C., *The Doubleman.*
Leavitt, David, *A Place I've Never Been.*
   - - -, *Family Dancing.*
   - - -, *Equal Affections.*
Lord, Gabrielle, *Jumbo.*
Malouf, David, *An Imaginary Life.*
   - - -, *Twelve Edmonstone Street.*
   - - -, *David Malouf: Johnno, short stories, poems, essays and interview.*
   Edited James Tulip,
   - - -, *Harland's Half Acre.*
Mann, Thomas, *Death in Venice.*
   - - -, *Collected Stories.*
Murnane, Gerald, *The Plains.*
   Australia: Angus and Robertson, 1988.
Neville, Jill, *Last Ferry to Manly*
Puig, Manuel, *Kiss of the Spider Woman.*
   - - -, *Blood of Requited Love.*
   - - -, *The Buenos Aires Affair.*
Nabokov, Vladimir, *Lolita.*

Rhys, Jean, *Voyage in the Dark.*

Robbe-Grillet, Alain, *Snapshots.*


Shelley, Mary, *Frankenstein.* Introduction by Maurice Hindle.


Soldatow, Sasha, *Rock-n-Roll Sally.*

Swift, Jonathan, *Gulliver's Travels.* Ed. Peter Dixon,

Townsend, Sue, *The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole, Aged 13 1/2.*

Virgil, *The Aeneid,* 1956 edition,
Journals.

Altman, Dennis. 'A Closet of One's Own.'

Angre, Linda. 'The Politics of Postmodern Photography.'

Baum Caroline, 'A very old wife’s tale that rings true to life'
*Weekend Australian* Feb 8-9, 1992, p. 5.

Benn, Tony. 'Perfect Body: Perfect Mind.'
*Camerawork* Nov, 1982, pp. 4-5.

Bolton, Richard, 'In the American East: Avedon Incorporated.'

Buchan, David, 'Menswear: A Brief History'

Cottingham, Laura 'Negotiating Masculinity and Representation.'

Crimp, Douglas. 'The Photographic Activity of Postmodernism'
*October* Spring 9, 1981, pp. 91-102.

---, 'Portraits of People with AIDS.'

Etherington-Smith, Meredith. 'Ciao, Bella'

Ennis, Helen, 'The 1970s and Now'

Foster, Hal. 'L'Amour Faux.'
*Art in America* Jan 1986, pp. 116-130.

Fumento, Michael. 'Do You Believe in Magic.'

Gardener, Carl, and Lomax, Yve. 'Post-modernism: Trith Falls Apart.'
*Camerawork* Summer, 1985, pp. 16-20.
Grosz, Elizabeth. ‘Bodies, desire and representation.’
Guiliatt, Richard, 'Rebel within a Clause.'
Hagen, Charles, ‘Peter Greenaway and the Erotics of Form.’
   Aperture: The Body in Question 121, Fall, 1990, pp. 72-74
Hughes, Robert. ‘Images of Old France.’
Huck, Peter. 'Waugh of Words.'
Latimar, Dan. ‘Jameson and Post-Modernism.’
Losche, Diane. 'Mother Courage: Jo Spence in Australia.'
Lewis, Paul. ‘Men on Pedestals.’
   Ten 8 Magazine 17, 1985, pp. 22-29.
Meyers, Kathy. ‘Towards a Feminist Erotica.’
Malouf, David. ‘Haunting Images.’
Rooney, Robert, ‘Art's a snap - or is it?’
Solomon-Godea, Abigail. 'Winning the Game When the Rules Have been Changed: Art Photography and Postmodernism.'
   Exposure 23.1, 1985, pp. 5-15
Smith, Terry, ‘Modernism and Realism : Some Orientations.’
Watney, Simon and Gupta, Sunil, ‘The Rhetoric of AIDS.’
   Exposure 24.3, pp. 7-16.
Catalogues.

Batchen, Geoffrey, Curator, *Borderlines: Recent Sydney Photographs.*


Crombie, Isobel, *New Acquisitions from the Department of Photography.*

---, *Excursions into the Postmodern: Five Melbourne Photographers.*

---, *Felix H. Mann: A Pioneer of Photojournalism.*

Crombie, Isobel and Brown, Sandra, *Twenty Australian Photographers from the Hallmark Cards Australian Photographic Collection.*


Sydney: RGANSW Ltd. in conjunction with Art-Network, 1986.

Hawkes, Ponch, *Generations.*
Lindsay, Eloise, Simon Blau: Eye to I.

Lingwood, James, ed., elsewhere Photo-based work from Australia:Julie Brown-Rrap, Jeff Gibson, Bill Henson, Jacky Redgate.

Martin, Adrian, ed., Experiment.

Merewether, Charles, A Marginal Body: The Photographic Image in Latin America.

Morrell, Timothy, Curator, Some Provincial Myths: Recent Art from Adelaide.


Robinson, Julie, Fragmentation and Fabrication: Recent Australian Photography.
Adelaide: Art Gallery Board of South Australia, 1990.


---, Introduction, The Lie of the Land.

Smith, Terry. 'Nothing if not Abnormal.'
The Independent April, 1992, pp. 28-29.

Tuckerman, Barbara, After the Artefact: An Exhibition of Contemporary Photographic Practice.

Warhol, Andy. A Film Retrospective.
Films.


Blow Job, Dir. Andy Warhol, Film Makers, 1964.


Dr Strangelove Or: How I Learnt to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb, Dir. Stanley Kubrick, Columbia, 1964.


Illustrations.

Fig. No. Details.

1 August Sander, 'Young Girl in Circus Caravan', 1932. 
John Szarkowski, Photography Until Now 

2 Richard Avedon, 'Rubey Mercer, 7-3-82'. 
Richard Avedon, In The American West. 
New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1989, Fig. 265.

3 Eugene Atget, 'Verrieres-Picturesque Corner, Old Building', 1922. 
Mike Weaver, ed., The Art of Photography 1839-1989. 
New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1989, Fig. 265.


6 Contents Page, Good Weekend Magazine. Age. 
April 4, 1992, p. 5.

7 Isobel Crombie and Sandra Brown, 
Twenty Contemporary Photographers from the Hall mark Collection. 

8 Duane Michaels, 'There is something I must tell you', 1986. 
Anne Hoy, Fabrications: Staged, Altered and Appropriated Photographs. 
New York: Abbeville, 1987, Fig. 11.
gelatin silver photograph, oil paint, 300cm/125cm, original in colour,  

Cibachrome 54"/40", Original in colour.  
Ross Gibson, elsewhere: Photo-based work from Australia  

Szakowski, op. cit., p. 204.

Gelatin silver print, 8"/10",  
Hoy, op. cit., Fig. 120.

13 Jacky Redgate, ‘Chiswick 1953, A portrait chronicle of photographs,  
Gelatin silver print, 50cm/40cm.  
Geoffrey Batchen, Curator, Borderlines: Recent Sydney Photographs.  

14 Personal collection.

15 Steven Lodjewski, Untitled, 1983, ‘Sydney Rooftops’.  
Gelatin silver, 25.8cm/25.6cm,  
Helen Ennis, Australian Photography: The 1980s  

Anne-Marie Willis, Picturing Australia: A History of Photography.  
Sydney: A & R, 1988, Fig. 140.
17  Ansel Adams, 'Rocks and Grass, Moraine Lake, Sequoia National Park, California', c.1932.
      Szarkowski, op. cit., p. 223.

18  Edward Weston, 'Nude on Sand', 1936
      ibid, p. 236.

      ibid, p. 270.

20  Imogen Cunningham, 'Two Callows', c.1929.
      'Imogen Cunningham: The Eclectic Spirit.'

21  Fred Picker, Zone VI Catalogue.

22  Les Walkling, 'Bridge across the abyss', 1984-5
    sequence of nine images, detail shown,
    81.4cm/99cm,
    Gelatin silver.
    Ennis, op. cit., p. 97.


      Willis, op. cit., Fig. 158.


      Szarkowski, op. cit., p. 260.


Illustrations.
ibid, p. 130.

29 Max Dupain, ‘Monsteria Deliciosa’, 1970
Max Dupain, Max Dupain.

Daniela Palazzoli, Photography Venic ’79.

Szarkowski, op. cit., p. 170.

32 Julie Brown-Rrap, ‘Gradiva’,

33 Sheridan Sheet Campaign

34 Bruce Weber, ‘Matt Dillon’, detail,
Bruce Weber, Bruce Weber.

35 Bruce Weber, ‘Chet Baker, Lets Get Lost Album’

36 Juan Davila, ‘Nothing if not Abnormal’,
The Independent Monthly, April, 1992, p. 28.


38 Jo Spence, ‘Post Operative Shock’,
Ros Coward and Jo Spence, ‘Body Talk?’
Holland, Spence and Watney. Photography Politics: Two.
39 Cindy Sherman, 'Untitled Film Still # 35', 1979,
   Hoy, op. cit., Fig. 89.

   Szakowski, op. cit., p. 297.

41 Fred Flood, 'Out of the Mist. A road Scene at Jolimont'.

42 Harold Cazneaux, 'Steam and Sunshine', 1935,
   Gael Newton, *Silver and Grey: Fifty Years of Australian Photography 1900-1950*.
   Sydney: A&R, 1980, Fig. 50.

43 Max Dupain, 'The Post', 1930-35,
   Newton, op. cit., p. 83.

44 Tracey Moffat, Untitled, 1989,
   *Something More* series,
   Crombie and Byron, op. cit., p. 36.

45 Robert Frank, 'Coffee shop, railway station, Indianapolis',
   Robert Frank, *The Americans*
   New York: Random House, 1986, Fig. 148.

46 Edward Steichen, Director, *Family of Man*.

   John Williams, *John Williams Photographs* Introduction by Sandra Byron,

Illustrations.
48 Sophie Calle.
Sophie Calle *Suite ventienne*.
Jean Baudrillard, *Please follow me*.

49 Henri Cartier-Bresson, ‘Santa Clara, Mexico’, 1934
Szakowski, op. cit., p. 220.

50 Max Kelly, *Faces of the Street: William Street Sydney 1916*

51 Alice in Wonderland, from the original illustrations

52 Swami Panchadasi, *The Astral World, Its Scenes, Dwellers and Phenomena*
No publication details found.

*Aperture* 94, Spring, 1984, p. 4.
August Sander, "Young Girl in Circus Caravan", 1932.
Richard Avedon, "Rubey Mercer, 7-3-82".
AN ENCOUNTER with a Male Feminist Wimp

um... If I asked you out
would you think
I was being oppressive?

starve the
lizards!
You must be
from Fitzroy.
AN ENCOUNTER with a Male Feminist Wimp

um... If I asked you out would you think I was being oppressive?

starve the lizards! You must be from Fitzroy.
WALKING THE DETECTIVES: Five Australian crime fiction writers go undercover with their creations on the shady streets of Melbourne and Sydney, where danger – and literary raw material – lurks
COVER STORY

WALKING THE DETECTIVES: Five Australian crime fiction writers go undercover with their creations on the shady streets of Melbourne and Sydney, where danger – and literary raw material – lurks.
TWENTY CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIAN PHOTOGRAPHERS
from the Hallmark Cards Australian Photographic Collection

Isobel Crombie and Sandra Byron
National Gallery of Victoria
Art Gallery of New South Wales
TWENTY CONTEMPORARY
AUSTRALIAN PHOTOGRAPHERS
from the Hallmark Cards Australian Photographic Collection

Isobel Crombie and Sandra Byron
National Gallery of Victoria
Art Gallery of New South Wales
Duane Michaels, "There is something I must tell you", 1986.
Cibachrome 54"/40", Original in colour.
Bevor der Krieg euch fällt, muß er fallen
Schafft die Volksfront, die den Frieden sichert!

John Heartfield, "Before the War Defeats You", 1936.
Bevor der Krieg euch fällt, muß er fallen!
Schafft die Volksfront, die den Frieden sichert!
Gelatin silver print, 50/40.
Ansel Adams, "Rocks and Grass, Moraine Lake, Sequoia National Park, California", c. 1932.
Minor White, "Rochester", 1954.
Imogen Cunningham, "Two Callows", c. 1929.
Photographing with Fred Picker
A Zone VI Photography Video, Approximately 75 Minutes

This video is the second produced by Zone VI in collaboration with the Academy Award nominee, John Karol. Because *Printing with Fred Picker* received unusual acclaim, "Photographing" was designed as a logical companion piece to it. While "Printing" is directed toward making expressive prints, "Photographing" explores Picker's approach to making negatives worth printing.

We accompany Fred Picker through a typical day of picture making among the hills, rivers, and towns of Vermont. There is also an assignment (portrait) photograph. Though all aspects of camera manipulation are shown and explained as are exposure determinations (Zone System and variable negative development) the emphasis is placed on the subjects themselves, how they are "seen", composed, and presented for maximum effect.
Photographing with Fred Picker
A Zone VI Photography Video, Approximately 75 Minutes

This video is the second produced by Zone VI in collaboration with the Academy Award nominee, John Karol. Because *Printing with Fred Picker* received unusual acclaim, "Photographing" was designed as a logical companion piece to it. While "Printing" is directed toward making expressive prints, "Photographing" explores Picker's approach to making negatives worth printing.

We accompany Fred Picker through a typical day of picture making among the hills, rivers, and towns of Vermont. There is also an assignment (portrait) photograph. Though all aspects of camera manipulation are shown and explained as are exposure determinations (Zone System and variable negative development) the emphasis is placed on the subjects themselves, how they are "seen", composed, and presented for maximum effect.
81.4 cm/99 cm, Gelatin silver.
Jimmy Dean, photographed by Roy Schatt, 1955.
of the Boudoir

Julie Brown-Rrap, "Gradiva".
Gravida of the Boudoir
The Sheridan Cotton Collection.
Now with spots.
The Sheridan Cotton Collection.
Now with spots.
Chet Baker
sings and plays from the film
"Let's Get Lost"

A film
by
Bruce Weber
starring
Chet Baker
Juan Davila, "Nothing if not Abnormal".
Barbara Kruger, "Admit Nothing".
Admit nothing

Blame everyone

Be bitter
Jo Spence, "Post Operative Shock".
Fred Flood, "Out of the Mist. A Road Scene at Jolimont".
Harold Cazneaux, "Steam and Sunshine", 1935.
Max Dupain, "The Post", 1930-35.
*Something More* series.
Robert Frank, "Coffee shop, railway station, Indianapolis".
The Family of Man

The greatest photographic exhibition of all time—503 pictures from 68 countries—
created by Edward Steichen for The Museum of Modern Art

Prologue by Carl Sandburg
The Family of Man

The greatest photographic exhibition of all time—503 pictures from 68 countries—created by Edward Steichen for The Museum of Modern Art

Prologue by Carl Sandburg
Sophie Calle, "Suite ventienne".
Henri Cartier-Bresson, "Santa Clara, Mexico", 1934.
Max Kelly, *Faces of the Street: William Street Sydney 1916*. 
Alice in Wonderland, "The Caterpillar".
True Occult Knowledge Gives You Practical Power and Strength

The

ASTRAL WORLD

Its Scenes, Dwellers and Phenomena

By

SWAMI PANCHADASI

True Occult Knowledge Gives You Practical Power and Strength

The ASTRAL WORLD
Its Scenes, Dwellers and Phenomena

By SWAMI PANCHADASI
Larry Clark, "Booby, 42nd St.", New York City, 1979.