Here is the fourth issue of BAYWATCH for readers new and old! Apologies for those who have been waiting eagerly, either to read this next issue or to see your work in print...a new editorial/production team is now being trained to assist with the various aspects of putting out a newsletter. Please ask about getting involved if you are interested in writing, reading, publishing, building networks via the written word.

You will find here a selection of things to enjoy: some about prison related themes, meditation, cooking, the importance of art in gaol, comments on recent news, stories, and poems. You will also find information about local services.

Your feedback is welcome.

Kit Shepherd
Editor
BAYWATCH
MSPC 1,2,4
Long Bay
May 2001

Special thanks to those who contributed items for this issue:
Terry Ayres
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...and to others who choose to remain anonymous

Apology to Stuart Lea-Caton whose linocut was in last issue, wrongly attributed to his brother

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Stuart Howard
Ray Galea
Russel Oldham

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INTERVIEW WITH TERRY AYRES, ART STUDENT

Kit: Terry, the teapot drawing, can you tell me about it?
Terry: I call it "Reflections of Reality"...I see myself in gaol. It is a wake-up call to the surroundings here; it sparks the senses into deciding not to come back.

K: What is reality in this sense?
T: I've spent 32 out of the past 30 years inside...wasted. Doing time feels like a dream. After some time you see that you are throwing your life down the toilet. This Art program has given me back the future. Since I started drawing I've got a sense of having a future. Not drawing in general, but two particular drawings, the teapot (it's a chrome teapot and I was in the cell one night and saw my reflection in it. I looked at myself and asked "What are you doing in there?" Time to change course...I know I don't want to come back.

Many people get out and say "That's the end of that", but in a few weeks, they're back. When I come back it's all the same crew. Each lagging it's with the same people who come back again and again. Life's too short to throw down the toilet.

K: And the second drawing?
T: That's a linocut, I was looking in mirror and doing a linocut, and then I thought, "Hang on a minute."

K: So it's this stepping back and looking at yourself from the outside that gives you a different way of looking at the situation?
T: Yes, but you have to be ready, to be able to take that step. When I first went to gaol it was in New Zealand; that was my "kindergarten lagging". There was no rehabilitation; all you learnt was how to do crime better. I shouldn't have been in either; it was a small matter and I wasn't to blame. But that first time sets the path for your life; it turned my life right round. I was lucky to stay free of it, to become a full-time student at the Malabar Art Unit...to be one of eight students out of how many thousands in the system. The amount of rehabilitation in the system is very small. This program gives us an interest, a different perspective on life and a new way of looking at ourselves. It's a positive among the negative.

BAYWATCH Number 4
Excerpt from:
CAN WE DO BETTER THAN OUR PRISON SYSTEM ?
by Bo Lozoff. Director, Human Kindness Foundation
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The primary work of Human Kindness Foundation is to offer spiritual support to people regardless of their circumstances. However, because we have been in so many prisons—I personally have visited around 500 institutions—we feel a responsibility to offer this brief statement into the widespread debate over crime and punishment, especially in the U.S.A [most of the following can be applied to other countries as well].

**The Mess We’re In Now**

America locks up more of its population than any other nation on earth, a rate five times greater than most industrialized nations. In 1970 there were fewer than 200,000 prisoners in the U.S.A. Now, less than thirty years later, California alone has nearly that many. There are nearly two million across the country.

The States are spending an AVERAGE of $100 million per year on new prisons. Prisoners currently sleep on floors, in tents, in converted broom closets and gymnasiums, or in double or triple bunks in cells that were designed for one inmate.

For the most part, prisons are barbaric, terrifying places. Crime victims derive no benefit from this misery. We offer convicts no opportunities to learn compassion or take responsibility for what they have done, nor make restitution or offer atonement to their victims in any practical ways.

Approximately 240,000 brutal rapes occur in our prison systems each year. Most of the victims are young, NONVIOLENT male inmates, many of them teenaged first offenders. They are traumatized beyond imagination. Michael Fay’s caning in Singapore was child’s play compared to the reception he would have had in nearly any state prison in America. Contrary to political sloganeering, we are not soft on criminals. We are irresponsibly vicious.

Nearly 70% of all U.S. prisoners are serving time for nonviolent offenses. Please let that sink in, because it’s probably not the image you’ve received from the media. We’ve been led to imagine a legion of heartless monsters plotting to get out and hurt us again. The truth is, most prisons inmates are confused, disorganized, and often pathetic individuals who would love to turn their lives around if given a realistic chance. Unfortunately, many of those nonviolent offenders will no longer be nonviolent by the time they leave prison. **Prisons Are Not Scaring Offenders Away From Crime; They Are Incapacitating Them So They Are Hardly Fit For Anything Else.**
Non-violent drug addicts are clogging our nation’s prisons. Sixty-one percent of federal prison inmates are doing time for drug offenses, up from 18% in 1980. All this incarceration is doing nothing to solve the drug problem. Many wardens, judges, and other officials know this, but it has become political suicide to admit it publicly. We must insist upon a mature dialogue about the drug problem. Keep in mind that the high-level drug dealers aren’t cluttering up our prisons; they’re too rich and smart to get caught. They hire addicts or kids, sometimes as young as eleven or twelve, to take most of the risks.

We need to address these issues in ourselves, our families, our communities. And we must press for changes in drug laws—not to legalize all drugs, because it’s not that simple. But we do have to decriminalize their use, treating the problem as the public-health issue it is.

Without drug offenders, our prisons would have more than enough room to hold dangerous criminals. As a result, we wouldn’t need to build a single new prison, saving us $5 billion a year. If we spent a fraction of that on rehabilitation centers and community revitalization programs, we’d begin to put drug dealers out of business in the only way that would last, by drying up their market.

Separate Violent And Nonviolent Offenders Right From The Start

It’s inconceivable that we routinely dump non-violent into prison cells with violent ones, even in local jails and holding tanks. What are we thinking? I know one fellow who was arrested for participating in a Quaker peace vigil and was jailed in lieu of paying a ten-dollar fine. In a 48 hour period, he was savagely raped and traded back and forth among more than fifty violent prisoners. That was twenty years ago, and since then he has had years of therapy, and yet he has never recovered emotionally. His entire life still centres around the decision of one prison superintendent to place him in a violent cellblock in order to teach him a lesson.

Most non-violent offenders do in fact learn a lesson; how to be violent. Ironically, we spend an average of $20,000 per year, per inmate, teaching them this. For less than that we could be sending every non-violent offender to college. We need to offer conflict-resolution trainings such as the ‘Alternatives to Violence’ programs currently being conducted by and for convicts around the country. Such trainings should be required for all prisoners and staff.

None of us, including prison staff, should accept violence as a fact of prison life, and
it would be easy not to. We could designate certain facilities as zero-violence areas and allow inmates to live there as long as they don't commit—or even threaten to commit—a single violent act. The great majority of prisoners would sign up for such a place. I can assure you. Only about 10% of the prison population sets the terrorist tone for most institutions, and they are able to do that because the administration gives no support to the vast majority of inmates who just want to do their time, improve themselves in some way, and get out alive.

**Join and Support the Restorative Justice Movement**

For decades our justice system has been run according to the tenets of 'retributive justice', a model based on exile and hatred. 'Restorative justice' holds that when a crime occurs, there's an injury to the community, and that injury needs to be healed. Restorative justice tries to bring the offender back into the community, if at all possible, rather than closing him out. Instead of 'Get the hell out of here!' restorative justice says, 'Hey, get back in here! What are you doing that for? Don't you know we need you as one of the good people in this community? What would your mama think?' Advocates of restorative justice are not naive. Sadly prisons may be a necessary part—a very small part—of a restorative justice system. And even then, prisons can be humane environments which maximize opportunities for the inmates to become decent and caring human beings.

We have to realize that we are all a part of this problem. If you vote, if you pay taxes, if you are afraid to walk alone at night, you are already involved. And so we have a choice to be involved solely in negative, destructive ways, such as home security systems, car alarms, personal weapons, etc. or in constructive ways which might actually change the problems. We all must make real changes—not just political ones, but also in our personal attitudes and lifestyles. America [and Australia] will not thrive, nor will we and our children be happy, by becoming a nation behind bars.

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"TEAR DROPS"

'BANG! BANG! The door slams shut and the lock goes CLICK! CLICK!"

This is the sound of being 'locked down' for all those people who haven't got a clue. This is the stage of isolation, when I contemplate what lies ahead. As the realisation of being incarcerated is ever so real...

What do I do?
Do I pick myself up, and utilise whatever limited resources available to survive? Or do I give into this forsaken system, they call a 'REHABILITATION SYSTEM'.

Whilst hanging onto the hope that being incarcerated is only a passing phase.
As the world on the other side of the corrugated-iron gate goes on without your presence.

Well, here I am, sitting in a barred up cage, a bed, a toilet, a washbasin. Welcome to your own private hell!

This is the time when I shed my tears of painful agony, forming a stream of lost hope...
And then I realise that the pain I'm feeling, is **UNFORESEEABLE** to others!

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"HALLOWAY OF SHATTERED DREAMS"

As I walk through this hallway of shattered dreams, I feel the pain, hatred, and the tortured screams. For these are the screams of souls long past. They came for the game—To play hard and to play fast...

Some came for the money, And some came for the fame. Some have found untold fortunes, And others have found nothing—but endless pain!

Some have turned to religion,
And others to drugs.
Some have become saints,
And some have become - thugs!

And all came to live,
But many have died.
While those that are left -
... like myself,
we all have one thing in common...
...We all search for a love that was denied...

"WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?"

Being brought up
By separated principles and cultures,
We tend to question others beliefs
For the fear of being 'different'.
But no matter the colour of your skin,
Nor the nationality that you portray.
We must realise that beneath our camouflage
We are an inevitably unique and special
Form of human beings.

We breathe the same air,
We wear the same textures in clothing,
May it be cotton or silk.
We make mistakes-
For reasons known and unknown.
We speak the same universal language
Beneath our different dialects.
We manufacture and use the same value of money
Although our currencies range in names.
We walk the same ground,
May it be here or in another continent across
the world,
But it is from this same grain of soil
That we are buried under
And laid to rest....

So why then,
Do we make ourselves superior
Amongst others?
Why then,
Do we seek to harm others?
Why then,
Do we criticise and abandon,
Our very own species of human beings?
It is our foolishness,
Greed and egoistic attitude.
That deprive the 'PEACE'
We as human beings,
Have been seeking all our lives.

By P. BUI

| ACROSS | | DOWN |
| 1. Italian city. | 1. Criminal immorality. |
| 6. Austrian TV Program featuring police K9 Inspector... | 3. Stiff or rigid. |
| 7. Informal good-bye in Italian. | 4. Enemy forces during World War II. |
| 11. Place of delight or contentment. | 5. Calmness of mind. |
| 13. Indicating position of space and time. | 7. Immeasurably long period of time. |
| 14. The name John in Scottish. | 10. Attached to. |
| 15. Combining all form, everywhere. | 13. Fragrant oil made from roses. |
| 16. Smallest unit of matter which can take part in a chemical reaction. | 14. Pub or small English country hotel. |
| 17. Writing point of a writing pen. | 15. Leave out. |
Loom of Stillness

“See the figure of an innocent man lying on his bed, arms behind his head, questioning why his luck reached an accumulative low.

Banished from society and alone in a dire situation, he is a metaphor to love ones, just another criminal to the system. Survival instincts reared from his past taught him to stomach humiliation and digest it with a frozen smile. He writes of afflictions — the slippery identities; abstract expressions; improprieties and violations. A solitary eccentric, he is preoccupied with emotions and passionate dreams. The scent of his lover’s neck, plus the luscious taste of his favourite fruit are relentlessly out of reach. It is a sad story without brightness — a miscarriage of justice, nonetheless, one that exists in a so-called egalitarian society.”

Ray Galbee
29th January 2001

How to cook a stir fry with mixed vegetables...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredients</th>
<th>Spices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2x2 minute noodles</td>
<td>3 tablespoons of sweet chilli sauce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 diced onion</td>
<td>1 teaspoon of chilli powder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 diced capsicum</td>
<td>2 tablespoons of olive oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 diced tomatoes</td>
<td>salt and pepper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 cloves of diced garlic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 boiled eggs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Method

1. First you will need to heat the frying pan up.
2. Next put two tablespoons of olive oil into the pan.
3. Then add the diced garlic and fry for two to three minutes.
4. Next add the diced onion and stir to a golden brown be careful not to burn.
5. After you have cooked the onion and the garlic add the diced capsicum and the diced tomatoes and let sit for about 4 to 5 minutes.
6. Then while the is cooking dice the boiled eggs and set them aside.
7. Cook the noodles for one minute.
8. Once the noodles are cooked, drain the water out and add the diced egg to the noodles and mix well.
9. After this is complete then you mix the noodle and egg mixture in with the fried vegetables in the frying pan.
10. Then you add three tablespoons of sweet chilli sauce or according to taste and one teaspoon of chilli powder or according to taste.
11. Add one or two pinches of salt and pepper and mix all of this in well and turn the frying pan down to medium temperature and let this simmer for about 5 to 5 minutes.
12. Give this a stir after 2 minutes once it is finished cooking your stir fry with mixed vegetables is ready to serve.

By L. Clarke
FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD
by Kit Shepherd

Recently, while seeing how a student was going with his distance education [TAFE course in FOOD PREPARATION and HYGIENE], I was inspired by what he was learning.

He is cooking for a group of inmates in one of the therapeutic programs, so has the big responsibility of not only providing meals that are good and substantial, but he needs to take great care with the health and hygiene aspects of working in a big kitchen.

He has found the information in the course very practical and important. How to store meals that are good and substantial, but one of the therapeutic programs, so has

"...and food poisoning could easily follow."

Since that conversation, I have been alerted to the danger of using a cutting board to chop salad vegetables and to butter bread, if it has recently been used to cut raw meats. Apparently wooden chopping boards are almost impossible to clean, so people nowadays are using hardened glass chopping boards for meat and veg. Keeping all foods in airtight containers is imperative to stop the spread of insects like weevils and to reduce the movement of bacteria, so don’t use those ice-cream containers and so on.

So another area of life where we take our knowledge for granted... but we learned it all, we know somewhere, and can learn more!

MEDITATION – THE ART OF LIVING
by Nick Manganas

Well into the information age we are the most informed generation in history. Online, on-hold, in flux. For many of us our daily lives are constituted by sounds and images foreign to the inner workings of our mind. The variety of visual signs surrounding our existence is continuously expanding.

But how much can we take? Although mass media help define our personalities and entertain us, sometimes it can all be just a little too much. Is there escape? Of course. But the answer may be too simple to convince you.

For over 2,500 years, meditation has proven a useful tool in not only helping attain enlightenment in the Buddhist tradition, but to find a sense of total peace. There are many different techniques of meditation, but the essence is to find the stillness between thoughts. With the estimated 60,000 separate thoughts we have a day, we have to learn to find the gap between them.

Pascal, over 500 years ago said, “all man’s miseries derive from not being able to sit quietly in a room.” Living in a global village, silence may be too hard to find. But if you do find it, that’s where the confronting challenge begins.

For many people with long-term illnesses, including PLWH/A (people living with HIV/AIDS), meditation is a useful tool to sponsor a sense of well-being. Meditation has been scientifically proven as a technique to reduce blood pressure and improve other bodily functions. Susan Lytton-Hitchens who has been practicing and teaching meditation for 25 years says that “the power of the mind is very strong in healing. Our thoughts can be creative or very destructive, and in observing the chatter of the mind in meditation and letting the thoughts go one by one, we become more deeply aware of ourselves. The need to change our thought patterns if they are not contributing to our well-being, then becomes clearer and more important.”

The idea is that if you do not have a balanced mind and a good quality of life, then you can not have a healthy body.

Thennisaro Bhikkhu in a talk entitled Using Meditation to Deal with Pain, illness and death, says “It’s only when people are face to face with a fatal illness that they start thinking about these issues, and often by that time it’s too late to get fully prepared. At the same time, if you are caring for someone with a fatal disease, meditation offers you one of the best ways to restore your own spiritual and emotional batteries so that you can keep going even when things are tough.

“As my teacher once said, the breath doesn’t belong to Buddhism or Christianity or anyone at all. It’s common property that anyone can meditate on. When we’re dealing with the breath, we’re dealing not only with the air coming in and out of our lungs but also with the feelings of energy that course throughout the body with each breath. If you learn to become sensitive to these feelings, and let them flow smoothly and unobstructed you can help the body function more easily and give the mind a handle for dealing with the pain.” Bernard Gibb leads meditation groups and has been meditating for 15 years. For Gibb, meditation gave him the opportunity to know the importance of silence and understand the need to give the body some rest. "It reduces my fears. It brings
me a great sense of peace and quietness. It allows me to let go and relax. Before I started meditating, I was someone who wasn’t really aware of themselves. I was out of balance and more prone to the external world.*

There are many different forms of meditation. With silent meditation your focus is on silence and breathing. With visualisation you may be focusing on an object. With mantra you recite as you breathe. The idea is to keep the mind busy until it stops. To find stillness, an acutely aware state of nothingness. A helpful way to begin if you are having difficulties is joining a group because. Group energy can be very productive and it can strengthen the experience.

Graham Stocks has been attending a meditation group facilitated by ACON for five years. Its is a silent meditation with two 25 minute sessions. For Stocks, meditation slows down and centres the self. “We sit still and silent for an hour and just let things be. You let go and you don’t have to try and struggle to do things. And there is an inner peace that comes out of that.”

Meditation for Stocks has a stabilising influence on his quality of life. “I started meditating about five years ago, before anti-virals were being widely used. I was slowly deteriorating and I thought I really needed something to help me. It is a stabilising thing to do.” Outside the meditation group he also has the opportunity to talk with other participants. “In a group there’s a level of support, and you learn about different medications and therapies and of course you get to know the people,” he says. “I go through periods where I meditate regularly at home, but the group is good because it is a commitment to do it.”

For people wanting to start meditating, Gibb recommends joining a group as it helps you get focused. “It helps you focus on your thoughts and observe them. And when you achieve that, you are actually creating a meditation.” His guided meditation groups usually involve four or five people. “I will guide people into an area of rest or peace, to go deeper inside themselves.”

But there are other unorthodox ways that Hitchins says “are not involved in the typicalities but you still get some benefit.” For example, just lying down listening to one of the many beautiful tapes available and visualising the journey can be useful in releasing anxiety, anger or just the stress of the day. Gazing into a pool of water, watching the waves coming and going along the seashore, or observing a magnificent sunset can also release the mind briefly and contribute to a more peaceful and relaxed state. Whilst not strictly meditation, for beginners this may be a good way to start instead of the more formalised fashion with the back straight and legs crossed.

No matter what technique one chooses to adopt, the significance comes from not only addressing the body and the mind, but also the spirit.

Marcos Garcia Roncero also meditates regularly and finds that it not only makes him more aware but he even enjoys his food and sleep more.

“Meditation is as simple as breathing. It’s about being aware of your breathing. It’s about being aware that everything in this life is constantly changing. To be aware that I am alive and to do so all I have to do is breathe. Meditation brings you equanimity.”

“The important thing is to achieve the balance between the mind and the spirit. That is the question. And it is the same for everyone, it doesn’t matter if you are king or the pauper, or whatever. We all breathe in and out and we are all human.”

Bhikku wants to remind us that it is our mind that is our most precious possession. “If you can keep it in good shape no matter what else happens around you, then you have lost nothing, for your body goes only as far as death, but your mind goes beyond it.”

“Many people complain that the hardest part of living with a disease like AIDS or cancer is the feeling that they have lost control over their bodies, but once you gain more control over your mind, you begin to see that the control you had over your body was illusory in the first place.”

It is difficult to determine the effectiveness of complementary therapies on the body. What is apparent is that complementary therapies represent different things to each individual. A study in Canada that was published in Social Science and Medicine analysed the different reasons why people adopted complementary therapies, which included meditation. The reasons cited included- a health maintenance strategy, a healing strategy, an alternative to Western medicine, a way of mitigating the side effects of drug therapies, a strategy for maximising quality of life, a coping strategy and a form of political resistance.

Just as the course of HIV can not be predicted, neither can the proper course of treatment for any particular individual. The goal is to find ways to stay symptom free for as long as possible and to prolong life. Meditation is just one method to help achieve this.

“At the same time,” Bhikku maintains, “if you tell ill people that they are suffering because their minds are in bad shape, and that it’s entirely up to them to straighten out their minds if they want to get well, you’re laying an awfully heavy burden on them; right at the time when they’re feeling weak, miserable, helpless and abandoned to begin with.”

The ultimate responsibility for all treatment decisions rests with the individual. Complementary therapies are not just an alternative to Western medicine, but a valuable source to improve one’s quality of life and reduce the severity of side effects caused by Western drug therapy.

For the truly brave, a tradition well over 2500 years old called Vipassana, is a technique to bring happiness and peace through self-observation. It is not an easy challenge nor a quick fix but a deep and difficult journey.

Vipassana is a ten day silent meditation retreat where participants learn about themselves and create discipline and a moral code. Vipassana does not have any ties with any sectarian movement and is tied to neither Buddhism nor any other organised religion.

Roncero has attended four of these retreats in the past ten years up in Blackheath in the blue Mountains. “I would recommend these retreats to everyone to improve their lives,” Roncero says.
The idea is that after a few days, your mind becomes so aware of the body's reactions to different emotions that the mind experiences a superb clarity. Hitchins says, "you have insight into the self that you otherwise wouldn't know."

Vipassana is run by trained volunteers and is free including vegetarian food and accommodation. All costs are met by donations made by participants. It is about finding the stillness between two thoughts.

Hitchins says, "there is a part of ourselves that doesn't inwardly want to explore. But another part is yearning to know ourselves and discover our own inner magnificence."

"What it all boils down to," Bhikku says, "is that as long as you are able to survive, meditation will improve the quality of your life, so that you can view pain and illness with equanimity and learn from them. Meditation has much to offer as a tool in helping you to satisfy your state of mind and enable it to transcend everything else that may come its way."

Further Details and References:

- Vipassana meditation (general information) http://www.dhamma.org/
- Vipassana Meditation Centre – PO Box 103; Blackheath, NSW 2785, Australia; Tel: (02) 4787-7436; Fax: (02)4787-7227; e-mail: info@bhumi.dhamma.org
- Doing Time, Doing Vipassana 1997 (video), Karuna Films Ltd, 52 minutes
- Changing from the inside 1998 (video), David Donnella Productions, 42 minutes
- Using Meditation to Deal with Pain, Illness & Death by Bhikku T. (aka Geoffrey DeGraff) A talk given to a conference on AIDS, HIV and other immune-deficiency disorders in Long Beach, California, Nov 13, 1993 (both of the above videos and articles are available from the ACON library – phone 9206 2000 for details of opening hours)

THIS ARTICLE ON MEDITATION IS REPRODUCED FROM THE NEWSLETTER 'with Complements', the official newsletter of the HIV Complementary Therapies Collective, Vol. 10, No 2 July 2000

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**CHORUS**

There's no way up, when you're feeling down
Every rock you climb
Comes tumbling down
No way out, when you're in so far
Speeding through the stop signs
In a stolen car.

**VERSE**

Hey my friend
I know you're feeling low
A weed has been growing, entangling your soul
Pull out the roots, plant new seeds
Drive out the demons, infecting disease
I've been a passenger deep in your mind
Watching from the shadows
While you ruin your life
I am your conscience, that voice in your brain
Your will, your virtue, come to take you away
Tired, dejected, darkness and night
I am your sanity, bringing you light
Rise from the bottom of that grey murky sea
Sail new horizons, set your wings free.

**CHORUS**

There's no way up, when you're feeling down
Every rock you climb
Comes tumbling down
No way out, when you're in so far
Speeding through the stop signs
In a stolen car.

---

**NO WAY UP**

Tattooed body on a leaking ship
Sails across the ocean on a downward trip
No direction, no control
Sinking to the bottom by his anchored soul
No tomorrow, no today
How can there be a future
When your mind's in a daze
Taking the highway, speeding along
Missing all the exits
Just a-singing your song

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**VERS"**

Choir: I never thought I'd see you here again
When all the people said it was not going to last
The day I woke up, you were there again
I never thought I'd see you here again
When all the people said it was not going to last
The day I woke up, you were there again

---

**CHORUS**

There's always up, when you're feeling down
Play the violin to a different sound
Always an out, when you're in so far
Feel off the mask for a brand new start.

By DANNY TILLOTT
Copyright
by K.J.S.

God set me on earth, with great parents and brother
A family so happy, would compare to no other
My first love, God took away from me
My sweetheart and I, were both only three
Childhood sweethearts, I was blessed with so many
Good mates and friendships, I had a--plenty
Love, learning, work and interests, filled my teen years
Blessed with supporting, extended family and peers
I met my wife, at my best mate's wedding
I fell in love, where was all this heading?
Under God's and society's saws, we became married
Because of our love, and the child my wife carried
When I held my first son, an aura came over me
I'm a father, how responsible I must be!
Second son came so fast, it made my head spin
Because we weren't really expecting him
How happy we were, to have these two children
This is a family, we had started buildin'
Expecting again, we moved to the farm
Our first daughter was born, she was a real charm
By this time I was about twenty four
The working and building was a great chore
At thirty I was now, a proud father of six
Three of each sex, seemed a good mix
The challenge was on, to be a success
Parenting providing, with love to be best
At forty I found sadly, I had no longer a mother
Seven years later, I lost my dear father
My wife did then leave me, with a great mess
I begged help from, with no success
My health was against me, and so was the bank
I wanted to die, to be quite frank

I struggled for months, to save the farm
A successful outcome, but the cost was great harm
I went to a dance, with now an ex-friend
A lovely lady I met, now she's with me to the end
I love her so dearly, she possesses my heart
I wish she was the partner, I had from the start
Her sister and family, I care much for as well
It's sad they have witnessed me go through this hell
I'm now fifty one, and am rotting in jail
My family turned against me, where did I fail?
I loved, cherished and raised, with my full heart and soul
The family that now has me put in this hole
The question I've asked god, many a time
Was it worth the effort, this family of mine?
With pride and strength, I've been a man
Now in this hellhole, I feel I've been damned
I've had enough of life, and it's now my time
Life so sadly shortened, god know I committed no crime....

(Continued 3 months later)

They save my life, I don't know what for
Couldn't they see, I don't want to live any more?
I slashed my wrist, trying again to die
There's nothing to live for, so why should I try?
I failed again, not enough did I bleed
But three times proves it, I will succeed
The law in its wisdom, thinks it knows best
How would they shape up if they were put to the test?
The report to the court, supplied by the shrink
Has unjustly condemned me, it sure does stink
To challenge him peacefully, my chance denied
Guilt prevented me, no matter how hard I tried
Depression is an illness, not a crime
If I had the right support, I would now be fine
Good people have helped me, great work that they do
Sister Madeline, Carmel and Fran, just to name a few
If society consisted of all people like this
The people of the world, would live a life of sheer bliss
I've been eager to help souls, I'm proud to say
I may now be alive, with friends and family that way
Great people of the world, love helping and sharing
Sorrow for the ones, who are selfish and non-caring

My beautiful lady seems to be fading away
Without her love, I'm going the wrong way

What she's missing out on, she doesn't understand
If she only supported me, she would see a great man

I love her so dearly, and to be honest and real
I have love for her sister, I can't change what I feel

With these feelings I've been honourable I'm proud also to say
None of the love for my sweetie, will this love take

I love my children, grand-children and dear wife
I can't help it, they are the love of my life

Number six grandchild Charlie, so sad we never met
My love through your mother, I'm sure you will get

Forgive them they don't realise, my children and wife
They can't see they are destroying what's been my whole life

Fifty one years I've been on God's wonderful earth
Done enough for three lifetimes, thank the lord for this

It's a great injustice that has been done to me
What's wrong with society, whey can't they see

Deep love and sincere thanks, goes to my dear brother Noel
You carry our family traits, within your heart and soul

Blessed we were, with the parents we had
The way we lost them, unforgettably sad

Good friend of mine dawn, yes I love you too
It's the condition I'm in preventing me facing you

You have what it takes to live a great life
I would have been privileged to have you as my wife

The law doesn't care whether I did it or not
They just want to convict me, to justify their lot

To the people against me admit your mistake
Live honest and honourable before its too late

I go to my grave still with the hope
That the law will be just to those that can't cope

I humbly thank god for all the love in my life
Especially that from and fro my darling wife

Fifty one years I have been here nearly fifty two
Most of these years my dear wife I have truly loved you

Death is quite near me now I know
I'm looking forward a better place I might go

I'll state it again, I committed no crime
There's no way I could hurt any family of mine

This is not the time to be saying hi
This is most definitely my last goodbye

PS when you see someone struggling with problems unsurmounted
True friends have the guts to stand up and be counted

The author of "My Life" wrote a post-script to this poem: "Since this struggle, I have moved on, overcome my depression, gaining strength by the day and have complete confidence that I will become stronger than I ever was."

---

Hi, I'm Christina, AOD (Alcohol and Other Drugs worker), AKA, DAO, (because that's how I sometimes feel when I get to work, DEAD ON ARRIVAL). I work in the old RIC or is it the old MRP??? Now called the MSPC at the Bay. My office is in the STYX, which is off the circle, in front of Activities.

If you need to see an AOD worker complete a referral form in your Wing and I will TRY to see you ASAP. Please DON'T mark it urgent unless it is urgent. The referral form does not have a specific space to write what you need, but you can make a note of it on the referral if you like. I encourage you to do this as it helps me to prioritize.

At the present time we are short one AOD worker and my workload has increased significantly which means it is taking me longer to see some inmates than it used to. This also means that there is a waiting list for inmates wanting a referral to a rehabilitation centre for COURT. I know this is frustrating for some of you but the GOOD news is another AOD worker should be starting soon which will reduce waiting times.

Regards, Christina,
AOD WORKER, MSPC AREAS 1, 2 & 4

POEM by Nicholas Coulumbis

Here I sit in a stinking cell,
Thinking of how low my life has fallen
Surrounded by thieves, killers and drug lords,
When I could have been at a party in my just jeans cords

Instead I'm here doing the program at the VPP. Trying to sort my life out and how it will be
I think of the day when I'll be free,
Living it up in a chakozone,
Never to return to prison life,
For one day I'll be happy with my family and wife.
The topic I have chosen is about two rugby league players who were found guilty on illegal drug use. They two players are Craig Field and Kevin McGuiness. They play football for the Western Tigers.

Why is everyone just looking at the big picture and not looking at what's underneath? Well I'll tell you why the news, newspapers, radio etc are all printing or saying two rugby league players were busted for ILLEGAL DRUGS, not saying why are these young men using drugs. Just for the record, the drugs were a non-performance enhancing drug (social or recreational drugs).

I am not saying for one second that recreational drugs are OK and just let these men go. What I am trying to say is that what leg these superstars to a drug was it because Kevin and Craig were under pressure from the actual game of rugby league, having problems at home, or were they just looking for a good time?

We have to look at all perspectives before we make a decision. It is also the first time the boys used drugs whilst playing professional football. We also have to take that into account too. The reasons why Craig and Kevin would do such a ridiculous thing is endless. They are on 3 to 4 hundred thousand dollars each. Was there pressure on their money situation? I have even heard people say "Kick them out for life". Who the hell does he/she think they are to make such a comment?

You can't just wreck someone's life for one silly mistake. Sure Kevin and Craig could have just been doing drugs for fun, but through what I have heard in the papers and television etc, I think they have been punished, humiliated disgraced and shamed enough. But given their high profile in rugby league the boys would have to accept some sort of suspension to act a small example you could say. To let other high profile league players know that drugs aren't acceptable in sports.

But back to the comment that the man/woman made saying to ban Kevin and Craig for life... like Craig Field has a lot of supporters who look up to him both young people and old, and Kevin McGuiness has hundreds maybe even thousands of Aboriginal supporters, given the fact he is Aboriginal. We need to give these young men a chance to win back the supporters and to prove that rugby league is a way better life and much more fun than doing recreational drugs or any drugs, for that matter. So please let's not ruin these young men's lives and give them a second chance because I know in my mind and in my heart it is the right thing to do. So I say again, please let's make the right choice, not the wrong one. THANKYOU.

by Dallas Bolt
I WILL LOVE YOU NESS

As long as I'm dreaming of you
As long as I'm thinking of you.
As long as I have a memory of you
I will love you

As long as I have eyes to see you
And ears to hear you
And lips to speak to you
I will love you

As long as I have a heart to feel you
I feel my soul stirring within me
And my imagination to hold you
I will love you

As long as there is time
As long as there is your love
As long as there is you
As long as I can speak your name Ness
I will love you

I love you more than anything in the world

Love always Scotty

By Scott Fraser

LOCKED UP

Some day I will be free
But forever I will remember
What this place has done to me
They took away my freedom
But this I did expect
They took away my dignity
And bruised my self-respect
They robbed me of my memories
Each time they shut the gate
They showed me no compassion
And taught me how to hate
But in the end I'll come out best
I'll beat them at their game
I'll walk with my head held high
I'll walk out with no shame

FREEDOM WE NEED

By Leigh Clarke

BIRD IN A CAGE

I sit in my cell doing time
I think to myself
Why did I do that crime?
I wish I was a bird
So
I could soar into the sky
I wake in the morning
Find my self standing in a line
One by one they call your name
And at that time
I wish I was a bird
So
I could soar into the sky
I go back to my cell
Where I feel I want to die
Stay strong and wait for my release day to come
So I can say
Good-bye

By Rocket Rod Ready 2000
BOLTING LIGHTNING

Bolting lightning exploded rays
Sun-shot messages reflect that hair
Light bursting fingers touch my days
With bubbling heart-driven care
Breaking this concrete mind its ways
In flickering emerald eyes that dare.

In desolation my imagining rays
Suffer long lonely prayer-less air
My spindrift tattered days
Cups my only care
My burning Man-movement ways
Stackened black-hole eyes lost blood dare.

By Angus Hunter

JUST PLAYING BY EAR

You ask me to write of the seasons
and Sundays' in the rain
of country roads and poets
and happy things not pain
well, I can oblige and write words till you hear
the voices of all the children that dance and sing
through these years
but it may not be right
because I'm just playing it all by ear.

So I'll write of the sea and the wind
on some cold Winters night
when I've walked by myself to decide
all the wrongs and the rights
of learning to live, to believe in myself
of knowing that love is not something
one keeps on a shelf.

And I'll write of those times
when I've talked to myself to decide
if in all that I've learned
there's been anything that I've tried to hide
then I've realised I have all I'll need
from knowing that loving is something you do from within
but all of this still may not be right
because I'm only playing it all by ear.

By Peter J. Flood
M.M.T.C.

FOR MY CHILDREN

Nursery rhymes, skipping lines
Marbles in the dust
Winter rain then the sun again
Bicycles and rust
The wind across the sky
Where the day had just begun
And castles in the sand
That I'd built when I was young

Different schools and golden rules
I never could recall
Camphor trees and honey bees
And old pictures on the wall
The drift of country air
Through the early morning light
And the restless reel and run of years
Now lost from my sight.

I still recall on so well
Those times when I could never tell
Just why the world was round
And why some things grew up
While others stayed down
When love was believing in something
I still can't explain.

And still ever now
There's little I know
In all that I've learned
That can help you to grow
For in learning, I've lost so much more
Than I've known.
Son that now all I'm left with is love
It is what it seems
And I'm still kind of hoping that's all you will need.

Peter J. Flood
Tracey
I met this chick a while ago
She looked a little rough,
Sitting at the 'local'.
Acting kinda tough,

She made her intentions very clear
And we headed for the car,
I was thinking I must be blessed
Just to get that far

We made it to her house in seconds
Mulled away the hours
And the way I performed
You'd think I had super natural powers

Now I'm not the one to brag too much
And good things never last,
But I like me beer real cold
And cars 'n' women fast

Now Tracey if you read this
And I know you never will
Thank you for those nights of bliss
Knowing you was a thrill

The Gronki
He walked into the yard
How, I'll never know
This young punk from down Goulburn way
Puttin' everyone on show!

Some of us said he's a spinner
Some "as tough as nails"
But of all the blokes I've ever met
In all those bloody jails,
He sits right there next to me
Sits down with a 'gronk'
Then as 'soon as the dribble flowed
I knew that he's the 'gronk'

His pants of types didn't fit
His shoes were way too big.
And the way he scoffed his tucker
You'd think he was a pig

But I'm a pretty forgiving bloke
And done a year or two
Took him under my wing
Showed him what to do

Now as the year's gone by
How, I'll never know
What was the gronk from Goulburn way
Runs the bloody show!!
Poems By Mic. C. War

A Day to Remember
The first day I spent in a maximum security prison was an unforgettable experience.
The expectation of the unknown among subvert and abhorring conditions was
easy to humble the bravest of men. I felt insignificant and worthless in such a
violent and unpractical place.

Communal showers and toilets without doors raised the level of trepidation, as well
as leaving you feeling undignified. Whatever privacy you once enjoyed quickly
vanished along with your freedom.

Plodding up and down an undersized courtyard, murderous eyes watching, peering
into your soul trying to determine your worth. Towering walls laced with razor wire
funneled sub-zero winds, dulling senses and already numb limbs.

Feeling deeply depressed I struggled to keep my sanity. To my surprise I was
looking forward to being locked in a tiny cell for 18 hours with no comforts. Hoping
and praying for the serenity in the confines of a single cell. Unfortunately, my horror
was intensified having to share a cell with a demented thrill-killer.

Unable to sleep, tossing and turning my mind wandered aimlessly. I felt so alone in
the midst of hundreds.

By S.M.J. (Winning Entry in Creative Writing Competition at Goulburn)
<table>
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<tr>
<th>UNIT</th>
<th>MONDAY</th>
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<td>KEVIN WALLER</td>
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<td>Deborah 9.00-12.00</td>
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<td>Distance Education &amp; Support</td>
<td>Anne 9.00-12.00</td>
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<td>The 12.30-3.00</td>
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<td>9 WING</td>
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<td>Tina 9.00-11.30</td>
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The 14th April was the anniversary of the sinking of the R.M.S. Titanic. This story is for those who don't know what the Titanic is!

It was the world's largest ocean liner and she was also one of the most lavishly appointed ships ever built. The Titanic was the second ship built out of three liners. Her sisters Olympic and Britannic were smaller than the Titanic. "She was the ship of all ships". There was no other ship like her. A virtual and floating palace.

The Titanic was 46,000 tons and over 3,000 feet long: from bow to stern she was bigger than the Empire State building in New York and was also meant to be unsinkable with her 16 water-tight compartments. When it came to fit out the Titanic, no expense was spared. For instance, the first class smoking room was fitted out with hand-carved mahogany woodwork with inlaid mother-of-pearl; she had three staircases, all made out of hand carved oak. The main staircase had a crystal dome over the top of the staircase. So one could forget they were on a ship altogether.

But when it came to lifeboats, they only had 20, which could carry 1,500 in total. But on the day the Titanic sailed it wasn't full. They didn't have enough room for everyone on board. The ship builder, Thomas Andrews, wanted more lifeboats, but was over-ruled by the ship's owner J. Bruce Ismay, who said that if they were to put another row of lifeboats, the first-class passengers wouldn't be able to take a stroll on the deck.

Also the Titanic had a dining room that could seat 500 people at one time, three cafes (one a replica of a French sidewalk cafe). All served to complete the illusion. She also was the first ship to have a swimming pool. Also the first to have carpet in most areas of first class. She also had a squash court, gymnasium, barber shop and it had its own newspaper and Post Office on board.

The Titanic set sail on her maiden voyage on 10th April 1912, from Southampton to New York with a stopover at Cherbourg, France, also Queenstown (now Cobh), Ireland, where the richest people in the world (and their maids boarded. The guest list included Benjamin Guggenheim and mistress.

The four days at sea went very well; everyone was pleased with the Titanic's performance. On Sunday 14th April, a church-service was held in the first class dining room, by Captain E.J. Smith. No lifeboat drill was done. It was regulations of the White Star line to have a lifeboat drill every Sunday while a liner was at sea. But because the Titanic was 'unsinkable' the captain didn't think it was necessary to have one.

During the course of that day, up to 10.45pm that night the Titanic received 8 iceberg warnings. Only the first 5 made it up to the bridge because the wireless crew were too busy sending out personal messages for the first class passengers to take them up to the bridge.

At 11.45pm that night, Frederick Fleet saw a dark shape in front of the Titanic and rang the watch bell three times and picked up the phone. He rang the bridge.

Officer Lightoller picked it up on the bridge and asked:

"What do you see?"

Fleet replied: "Iceberg right ahead. Sir."

Lightoller thanked the crown's next and shouted:

"Iceberg right ahead! Hard Port! Reverse the engines! Close the water-tight doors!"

After a few seconds the Titanic wasn't turning. She was going 22 knots at the time, faster than she was meant to be doing. They thought the Titanic could or would only do 20 knots at the most.
The ship started to turn. It looked like they were going to miss the iceberg. But she hit, because icebergs are small on the surface and bigger under water. The iceberg hit on the starboard side of the ship which sent a jolt throughout.

Most passengers were in bed asleep and didn't feel anything. But those that were up did, and thought the ship had dropped a propeller blade. The captain came to the bridge and asked what had happened. Lightoller told the captain that they had hit an iceberg on the starboard side.

Captain went to the starboard side wing and looked for the iceberg, which was now gone, but saw ice on the forecastle of the ship. He ordered the ship to an ALL STOP. He called Thomas, the ship's builder to sound the ship. Thomas Andrews went to look at how much damage was caused. Water was coming in the Forepeak hold No 1 and 2, Boiler Rooms 1,3 and 4. Ten feet of water had come in within the first 15 minutes. [The Titanic was made up of 16 watertight compartments and could stay afloat with the first four flooded. But five were taking in water.]

He went back up to the bridge. The time was about 12.10 am, 25 minutes after the crash. He told the captain what damage there was, and that the Titanic would sink. He said the Titanic had an hour, two at the most to live.

The passengers at this stage were told to go back to bed, that there was nothing to worry about. But the ship had stopped and would be moving again soon.

At 12.15 am the captain gave the word to abandon ship. Women and children first into the lifeboats. He knew that there wasn't room in the lifeboats for everyone on the ship. The stewards started to knock on the first-class room doors and told them to put on warm clothes and helped them into their life-jackets and told them to go up to the boat deck and wait for orders.

Second and third-class had different treatment. Stewards just walked up and down the hallways saying:

"Put your life-jackets on." Second class were allowed up to the boat deck. But not third class, they didn't want them mingling with the first-class passengers, so they would take them up in small groups when the order was given.

At 12.25 am most lifeboats were swung out and made ready for lowering. But they were still waiting for the Captain's orders to start filling the boats.

"Better start putting the women and children in the boats, Sir, he said this a couple of times. The Captain was in shock that the ship was sinking. Then he said: "Yes, women and children first."

At 12.30 am the loading of the lifeboats began. At 12.45 lifeboat number 7 was launched from the starboard side of the ship. The lifeboat could carry 60 people, but left the Titanic with 28 people, with only a slight list to the ship noticeable.

Passengers were hesitant to leave the Titanic to go into open sea in such a small boat. They still were thinking that the Titanic couldn't sink. She was UNSINKABLE. And the officers loading the boats were frightened of buckling the boats if they filled them. They didn't know that at Southampton three lifeboats were lowered with the weight of 70 men in them.

At 12.50am Quartermaster Rowe started firing distress rockets. He saw another lifeboat's lights not far from the Titanic, which was the Californian, stopped by an ice-field it was later found out. But their wire operator had gone to bed at 11.30 am and failed to respond to the Titanic's cries for help.

At 12.55am lifeboat number 5 from the starboard side was launched. It could carry 65 but only has 41 in it. At 1.00 am lifeboat 6 port side was launched...could have 65 people but only carried 28.

As each boat was lowered, some boats left with extra spaces and at the end, some boats were overcrowded. Each of the officers overseeing the filling of the lifeboats acted differently: one allowed women and children first others included men too.

There were two more lifeboats left but they were on the roof of the officers' quarters and they didn't have the time to launch them. They literally washed off the ship upside down, but they still had people on them, all men, and mostly crew members. Collapsible A had 13, Collapsible B had 30, but two of them died before they got to the rescue ship.

At 2.17am the last distress signal was sent by the Titanic. In the early morning hours of April 15, 1912, the Titanic became the first ship in history to send the new SOS distress call.

At this time many passengers and crew were knocked or swept into the icy water. The bow quickly plunged under the water and the forward funnel collapsed and landed on many of those struggling in the water.

The stern of the ship was now 20 storeys out of the water, all the lights were still shining brightly, then started to break in half, between the 3rd and 4th funnel. Then the lights blinked once and then went out forever. The stern then fall back into the water, level again, and within minutes, the stern started to fill with water and started rising again, until the stern is pointing straight up to the sky, and bobbed like a cork for a minute and then slid into the water.

It was about 2.30 am when the Titanic slid beneath the water, leaving over 1,500 people in the water. The lifeboats that were there just kept rowing, even though the people in the lifeboats could hear the cries for help form the people left in the water, they didn't go back, because they thought they would have been swamped.
Second Officer Lowe got four boats together and made one empty boat to row back to the people in the water. But this took time and by the time he started to row back the cries for help had died down. They found most of them were dead; they picked up six people out of 1,500. About 6.30 am the Carpathia arrived. It had been going at full speed to the Titanic since they got her distress signal at 12.10am, but her top speed was 18 knots per hour.

This account has been written to those who died on the Titanic. And may this horrible night never be forgotten.

Written by David O'Donnell

REFERENCES:
The Titanic Story, hard chosen, dangerous decisions by Cox, S. Open Comed Palo, Chicago 1999
Movie: Titanic
Various items from the public domain, on Internet

Communication

FRUITS OF CONVERSATION

Talking to people is one of the greatest adventures I can think of... you never know which direction things will go, and you can direct the situation to travel down all sorts of interesting byways!

Recently I met a colleague in the cafeteria for lunch and our conversation unfolded in a way that I want to share. I know she is a singer, but she doesn't get a lot of opportunity to sing in public, so I asked her about the latest chances she had had. She said that she'd prepared herself for St Patrick's Day (she's Irish) I be able to take part spontaneously in a concert, if there was an opportunity at a venue she was going to. That didn't happen for her, but, she went ton to say, she always sings in THE CAR and finds it very therapeutic.

I was curious to know what she meant by "therapeutic"... I just get lost in the pleasure of it. I have taught myself to expand my range by singing when I travel long distances. Sometimes I notice people looking at me from other cars when we're at the traffic lights, but I don't mind: "it's my own little world!"

This reminded me that singing is important for me too (I'm not a singer), especially around children. There are four young children who live in my building and often we do things together. When the games get a bit tense, I will sing a song that we all know, and they join in straight away. It's a very nice feeling, to be all singing the same words, at the same time, with the tune that you've all learned - instead of talking over each other or having an argument. And always one song leads to another!! I've made sure I get to know more songs that children like.

At this point in the conversation, my colleague started to tell me how her singing had been the reason she had met one person who became a very good friend, some years ago. She had been a casual school teacher in a country primary school and one day in the classroom, to control a rowdy group, she began to sing to get their attention. They were surprised, but when she said she'd teach them the song (and Irish song, called Cockles and Mussels) they were pleased to learn it.

One boy, on the way home that day, sang the song in the car to him mother. The mother was surprised to hear him singing, and she was interested to find out who this new teacher was, so she made a point of meeting her. That's how the friendship began... all because of a song!

So develop those conversation skills... and you'll be treated to stories in people's lives.
Uruguayan novelist Eduardo Galeano says: ‘Never have so many been held incommunicado by so few.’ He describes this as ‘the dictatorship of the single word and the single image, much more devastating than that of the single party. We are creating a world in which a small and shrinking commercial monopoly gets to tell all the stories while the rest of us get to watch and listen.

The deepest irony of all this it that, as the economy globalizes, we actually find out less and less about one another from the media.

Just as in the 1960s political consciousness began to be raised about the degradation of the natural environment, there is a nascent awareness working to protect the diversity of our cultures and information.

One of the most pervasive myths is that we live in an ‘information age’. We actually live in a media age, in which most of the available information is repetitive, politically safe (that is, it reflects the ‘one true path’) and is limited by invisible boundaries. – John Pilger