

YESTERDAY'S NEWS NAT THOMAS

MELBOURNE TRUTH, SATURDAY, AUG. 5, 1967

LSD GANG RUN NAKED DOWN MOUNT

and play Pan pipes

* SECOND INSTALLMENT of taking a trip on the drug LSD, as told to a Truth reporter by Mike.

Mike is a young Englishman who spent some time in the U.S. and then came to Melbourne with Diane for three months.

They are now on the way to India to investigate the drug hashish, which is legal on sale there.

Diane, 22, worked as a French translator in Melbourne.

So some friends and I decided to come to Australia and maybe buy an island off the coast of Queensland and start a commune, which is a place where everyone lies around and feeds and puts in what cash he can.

We had a conference at a place near the University of California, at Berkeley. It was decided that Diane and I would be the advance party. We were to get jobs and look over the prospects. The other people would follow us in a month or perhaps a year.

I was due to leave for Sydney on a Tuesday. The others, three couples and a baby, decided to give me a big send-off on the Sunday.

These couples. John was 26. He had been an All-American water polo player and mostly lived by his wits. His wife, Eva, had a master's degree in sociology from Stanford University. She was a teacher.

Earl, 30, a big, bearded man — they called him Big Earl — was a crane operator. His wife, Kay, was a teacher, too. Their baby was called Nathan



Commonwealth of Australia

REGISTRATION for NATIONAL SERVICE

EXCERPT FROM SULLIVAN'S TRAVELS (1941), written and directed
by Preston Sturges

SULLIVAN: This picture is an ANSWER to Communists. It shows we're
awake and not dunking our heads in the sand like a bunch of ostriches. I
want this picture to be a commentary on modern conditions, stark realism
and the problems that confront the average man.

LEBRAND: But with a little sex.

SULLIVAN: A little, but I don't want to stress it. I want this
picture to be a document. I want to hold a mirror up to life. I want this
to be a picture of dignity - a true canvas of the suffering of humanity.

LEBRAND: But with a little sex.

SULLIVAN: With a little sex in it.

HADRIAN: How about a nice musical?

SULLIVAN: How can you talk about musicals at a time like this? With
the world committing suicide, with corpses piling up in the street, with
grim death gargling at you from every corner, with people slaughtered
like sheep!

HADRIAN: Maybe they'd like to forget that.

Yesterday's News is a project based on a personal audit of the media
I consume and why I often make poor consumer choices. I try to be well
informed and read quality, well-researched journalism, but more often
than not I find myself clicking on links like Hollywood's shortest
weddings, or cosmetic surgery procedures gone bad. It's a real dilemma.

There are so many issues to be concerned about and connected with and
I'm a firm believer that our actions can make for change. However there's
no denying the allure I feel toward the inner workings of the lives of
people I will never know. It's surreal.

I think about the media a lot. Rupert Murdoch's success, I reckon, is that
he's always known how easily distracted people are. By a pretty starlet,
salacious celebrity gossip, innuendo, entertainment and escapism.

Yesterday's News addresses a media landscape in turmoil. The exhibition
incorporates writing and DVD footage of The Truth newspaper from 1967
(the year of my birth) to the mid 70's.

The headlines are genius, hurling themselves off the pages at you,
compelling you to read on. Pearlers like-

'Girl: I Paid \$290 To Be A Virgin Again, But It Didn't Work',
'LSD Gang Run Naked Down Mount, and play Pan pipes'
'Should Couples Split Up For The Holidays? Like a second honeymoon with
a new partner'

My Uncle John used to buy The Truth and on holidays, us kids sat in the
boat shed to peruse his stack of old copies, eyes wide, look outs posted
to announce the threat of approaching grown ups. It was a seductive
naughty pleasure, perusing on the topless '70s hotties, comparing their
big boobs and trying to decipher the cheeky cartoons. It was a newspaper,
but we weren't there for the news content.

SULLIVAN: There's a lot to be said for making people laugh. Did you
know that that's all some people have? It isn't much, but it's better
than nothing in this cock-eyed caravan.

Nat Thomas 2012

Calamity Nat By Dan Cass



Sharpshooting legend Annie Oakley (13 Aug 1860–3 Nov 1926), born Phoebe Ann Moses, performed with Buffalo Bill's Wild West show for 17 years.
<http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/17/Miss-Annie-Oakley-peerless-wing-shot.jpg>

I.

'...the West is America *only more so.*'¹

Nat Thomas is a character. But first I want to talk about me.

Recently I have been reading histories of the American West, to learn about success and optimism in a time of change. It has made me realise that Nat Thomas is like the West's Calamity Jane. She amuses us, tells the truth and watches our back.

Australia in 2012 feels a bit like the wild west, with miners, moguls and robber barons running amok. We are all of us stuck in the fossil fuel badlands, but dreaming of a new continent of possibilities, a solar frontier.

The strategic goal of my business as a lobbyist (and a large part of the meaning of my life) is to search out how to accelerate the passage to this new continent, to a Solar Age.² On present trends, solar and other renewable energy will get cheaper than conventional electricity for the whole world, rich and poor, over the course of the next decade. But that is not fast enough. We don't have that much time left. The future, as philosopher Tony Fry says, is already almost full.³

My hunch is that when we find out how America was so successful as a user of non-renewable resources, then we can make our century successful as a user of renewable energy. I suspect that it comes down to power and timing; when to lay down the law and when to shoot from the hip.

Our starting point is Frederick Jackson Turner's Frontier Thesis. Turner presented his ideas to the American Historical Association in 1893, in an essay titled "The Significance of the Frontier in American History".

Turner proposed that the process of pushing a frontier westward across the North American continent in the 19th century and to a lesser extent, the 18th, created the optimistic character of the USA. Turner believed that the frontier forged the characteristics of the American intellect:

That coarseness and strength combined with acuteness and inquisitiveness, that practical, inventive turn of mind, quick to find expedients, that masterful grasp of material things, lacking in the artistic but powerful to effect great ends, that restless, nervous energy, that dominant individualism, working for good and for evil, and withal that

buoyancy and exuberance which comes with freedom...⁴

The 'restless' trajectory launched by the explorers and Indian traders, pilgrims and prospectors of the American West enveloped the whole world during America's century (the 20th). Our ideas of progress are still animated by the 'nervous energy' of the American West. As the quote atop this essay says, the West is America *only more so*.

The critic Robert Hughes and others have mischaracterised modernity as synonymous with the Age of the Machine (in a naive dichotomy with romanticism). A more realistic view is that the idea of modernity is a cyborg construction—part machine, part organism. In a literal sense, the westward creep of modernity away from the Atlantic coast was primarily a story of humans and animals, even when punctuated by iron and gunpowder.

The idea of America became closely associated with its technological conquests. It was technology that enabled the wars against the Indians (and sundry Europeans), the destruction of the American Bison and Passenger Pigeon, the spread of the telegraph and railway. But the self-image of the Republic and its citizens also drew heavily on the evolutionist ideas synthesised by Charles Darwin in *The Origin of Species* (1859).

Every era seeks to naturalise its passions, claiming they are in harmony with the true order of the universe. Modern people see themselves reflected in the dominant scientific metaphors of the time. For example, we understand



A treaty negotiation group made up of Dakota men from the Great Sioux Nation. The US-Dakota War of 1862 was one of the major conflicts of the American West. Image c.1858

ourselves today partly in terms of computer science, as network nodes, receiving, transmitting and generating content, as if that is the medium of the social bond.

Religious Americans and America's politicians, with their nascent doctrine of manifest destiny, naturalised their actions with organic, evolutionary metaphors. Frederick Jackson Turner was exposed to paleontological evidence of evolution under Thomas Chrowder Chamberlin and agreed that if living things evolve, from primitive to ever more advanced forms, then a similar process must hold sway over technologies, ideas and human societies.⁵

Turner interpreted the contemporary 'germ theory' to explain the westward expansion of European civilisation across America. He proposed that while the settled cities back East were evolving in the linear fashion, like European cities, the frontier society had to always start from the primal state. American society was constantly recapitulating its own evolution at the Western Frontier;

Thus American development has exhibited not merely advance along a single line, but a return to primitive conditions on a continually advancing frontier... This perennial rebirth, this fluidity of American life, this expansion westward with its new opportunities, its continuous touch with the simplicity of primitive society, furnish the forces dominating American character.⁶

In the 20 years that I have been involved in the climate debate, I have seen it regress to a primitive state. Climate scientists never used to get death threats in the 1990s, when global warming, as it should be known, first came to prominence. Since then, the UN's climate laws have shown themselves to be weak. The Kyoto Protocol, which is the only binding agreement, runs out this year.

Al Gore with Suntech founder Dr Zengrong Zhi, who was a solar scientist in Australia until he went back to China because he had no support. A decade later, Suntech was the largest solar company in the world and Zhi was China's richest person. Image July 2010. www.rechargenews.com/energy/solar/article220737.ece



Proponents of 'soft technology' and 'appropriate technology' in the 1970s were the pioneers of the solar frontier. The almost half a million Australian households that have some sort of solar technology (solar PV, hot water or passive solar architecture) are the settlers. The explorers today are the mavericks who are saying that we should be carbon neutral, then go beyond zero emissions and help the Earth repair itself.⁷

The race is on to dominate the new renewables economy. General Electric is the biggest technology company in the world and it is now a leader in solar, wind, smart grids and all the rest. America and India have policies in place to bring the price of solar down to below coal and gas electricity within a decade. Expect to see thousands of electric cars within a few years, even on Australian streets.

But progress is not assured. The solar frontier is a fierce place. There are plenty of dirty rotten scoundrels, all out to make a fast buck. Black hats with big guns lurk in every saloon. Media proprietors and mining barons, gold diggers and rent-seekers, lobbyists and ad men are all whoring themselves to the highest bidder.



Rupert Murdoch with his 2nd biggest News Corporation shareholder, Prince Alwaleed bin Talal. Image 2009. <http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/08/26/saudi-royal-backs-imam-and-fox-news/>

If civilisation is going to make it through the 21st century, we need to arc up now and shoot from the hip. As Tony Fry has argued, if we wait much longer then, the future will be full, of our rubbish.

We could imagine new versions of prosperity, a reprised frontier spirit of energy independence and self-sufficiency.⁸ If things go very badly, we will need stories to tell around the campfire when the seas rise and chaos descends.

II.

In an era when the truth is too inconvenient to talk about in polite (resources) company, Australians need a source of honesty. According to William Shakespeare, King Lear failed to see what his evil daughters were up to, so he needed a fool to whip the dog of truth out of its kennel (Act I, Scene iv).

Shakespeare's contemporaries would have recognised Calamity Nat Thomas as a fool. She says what we can't say. She crosses the line. She goes too far.

Editors sense that the public sees through vapid reportage and analysis, so they cast their cartoonists to be the Elizabethan fools (or the Calamity Janes). Cartoonists like Ron Tanberg, Fiona Katauskis and First Dog on the Moon have an almost exclusive license to tell it as it is.

So how are we to read the media?

Even the quality media is so ungrounded that trying to understand the world from the pages of a newspaper requires not just reading between the lines, but reading between the Tweets. We teach ourselves how to sift through vast quantities of churnalism without getting cheated by the misinformation.

Nat Thomas knows how to read a newspaper. She has been using the media for a long time in her own art and in collaborative art made as Nat and Ali and DAMP.⁹ She even provoked commercial TV and radio current affairs programmes into condemning her art.

Nat often clips both of Melbourne's dailies. *The Age* is the Fairfax broadsheet coveted by Gina Rinehart, the iron-ore heiress who is now acknowledged to be Australia's richest person. The other local daily is the *Herald Sun*, a News

Limited tabloid belonging to the traditional owners of the Australian media landscape, the Murdoch clan.

In *Yesterday's News*, Nat has drawn on *The Truth*, a tabloid paper that folded in 1995. *The Truth* was a racy read, with Page 3 girls and a seeming obsession with depicting the sexual revolution and drugs going down in suburbia.

I think that the reason Nat takes the mainstream and low-brow media so seriously is that she gets it. She knows that it is both serious and absurd, like life. Its not just that she knows we are headed for global warming and other external catastrophes. Nat is attuned to the internal calamity of being a human who cares and thinks but ultimately must love, live and die without knowing enough or doing enough that is good.



NAT THOMAS
APPROPRIATION: HOW APPROPRIATE IS IT?
32 April - 10 May 2009
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Nat looks to tabloids such as *The Truth* to find the lies that the powerful want us to believe. Nat reads for clues to what is going on beneath the surface of the news, like an analyst reading the analysts' dreams. She un-polishes the turds. She sifts for fool's gold.

Like countless millions of other people around the world, Nat has thought a lot about Rupert Murdoch lately. I suspect that Nat and Murdoch would hit it off. Compared to Gina Rinehart and the late Kerry Packer, who was another of Australia's media moguls, Rupert Murdoch is a scholar and a gentleman.

If Murdoch were ever imprisoned for hacking felonies, Nat would visit him in the stockade. She'd bring him clippings. She'd make him laugh.

Next time the Murdoch clan throws a big party in Melbourne, Nat might be there. She's one of the world's great party crashers. That's how it rolls in the wild west; lawless and unpredictable. As Frederick Jackson Turner said, the frontier takes us back to 'primitive conditions' and the 'perennial rebirth' of the social state.

If there is any justice, then we could surely use our collective 'practical, inventive turn of mind' to replace fossil fuels with renewables. But we would need to be as fleet and audacious as a work of art. The question is, can we muster our frontier courage, before the future is full?

*Dan Cass is a consultant based in Melbourne.
He writes at www.dancass.com/blog*

¹ Clyde A. Milner II, 'Introduction' in *The Oxford History of the American West*, eds. Clyde A Milner II, Carol A O'Connor and Martha A Sandweiss, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 2 (emphasis in original)

² Physicist Fritjof Capra defined 'Solar Age' to mean all renewable energy technologies. See his book *The Turning Point: science, society and the rising culture* (New York: Bantam Books, 1982)

³ Australian philosopher of design Tony Fry has turned increasingly to sustainability theory in recent years. He proposes a new way to understand the entropic impact of pollution and destruction, in terms of time and human potential. As we wreck the planet, we are diminishing our options and in that sense, 'taking away' time or 'filling up' the future (with junk). See Tony Fry, *Design as Politics* (Oxford: Berg, 2010)

⁴ Fredrick Jackson Turner, 'The Significance of the Frontier in American History', (1893), p.18 http://us.history.wisc.edu/hist102/pdocs/turner_frontier.pdf, (accessed 9 Jan 2012)

⁵ The Darwinism debate in philosophy and politics was always more than just a dispute between creationism and evolutionism. Social evolutionists could use Darwin to justify competitive capitalism or other schemes, such as anarchist communalism. See for example Petr Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid, a factor of evolution*, (1915) available as an ebook at Project Gutenberg (<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/4341>)

⁶ Turner, p.1-2

⁷ For examples, see Zero Carbon Britain (www.zerocarbonbritain.com) and Zero Carbon Australia (www.zerocarbonplan.org).

⁸ For the best revision of these new ideas of prosperity, read Tim Jackson, *Prosperity Without Growth: economics for a finite planet*, (London: Earthscan, 2009).

⁹ Here is a video of Nat and Dan and Kylie Wilkinson talking about art, cooperation and climate, on a DAMP work at The 6th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art held in Brisbane (2009–2010). (<http://vimeo.com/35123265>)

SHOUTING AT THE NEWS

When I read The Australian or Herald Sun or any other News Limited newspaper (haven't forgotten you MX!), it takes me seven pages to get angry. I make statements aloud like:

"Yeahyeahyeah Occupy protesters shouldn't affect retail in the CBD with their pinko greeno free speech. Takes all the pleasure out of buying gelato yeah. The only speakers permitted in the city square should be playing easy listening music yeah."

OR

"Are you serious?! I don't CARE about Kim Kardashian's brief marriage or her latest range of handbags. You're not pals with her, neither am I, so stop gossiping about strangers! How do you people know how many sleepless nights the girl has?"

OR

"Mining giants are the backbone of our mining based economy. Let them use our great great grandchildren's land and turn some COIN. Resources tax? Might piss 'em off... what about the rich, elderly shareholders? What about those jobs?"

Outback Australia. That land's just sitting there doing nothing. Open out that shit, pay a large work force handsomely (drop in the bucket). Few decades should do it before the next place. Yes yes..."

"Uhhh... your coffee?"

It's the waiter. I generally read newspapers in cafes while I wait for coffee. I like the ritual of reading a newspaper on a weekend afternoon but there's a sameness about Australian newspapers and now I restrict myself to cricket scores. One paper's like another these days; what's covered and how it's reported.

All a bit shit. Maybe petty.

Going back in time if I may, I first got involved with print media in the early '80s. My best friend Grant Crampton had a paper round and they needed an extra kid.

"You get \$14 a week and it only takes a couple of hours. Easy peasy Morgo!" said Grant.

My bike was in trim condition, Dad was excited as all hell about the whiff of a work ethic and so I got my first job. Back then, a journalist was a noble creature. Looking for a scoop, exposing the wrongs at all costs and telling the people the truth.

As I grew older, I learned the phrase 'The Fourth Estate', meaning the all-seeing press, combining freedom of speech and information to publish the truth about everything that affects the public. From a Prime Minister's actions to a petty thief's.

"Keep the bastards honest" sums it up.

News reportage had to be factual, unbiased and written objectively otherwise it wasn't journalism. It was speculation, opinion or worse, vitriol.

An anger management course seemed feasible after I sat through, The Project an infotainment TV show (or whatever the hell it is) on Channel 10. How does it work? Well, The Project panel raise several topical issues in the news, then chat/banter their views/facts with adult expressions on their faces. Move to a serious final statement on each topic from the oldest male commentator and then the comedian (or whatever the hell he is) shoots a perplexed look at camera four. Cut to the YouTube kitten chasing a laser pointer over a sleeping grandmother and... we're out.

My hair went partially grey.

I should lighten the truck up I guess. There are plenty of quality news sources and TV shows out there. I just resent the veneer of authentic journalism these shamblers present, as they attempt to indoctrinate us into some subjective perspective on current events. It's a slippery slope towards USA's Fox News or North Korea's version unless we demand better.

As for me, I need to purchase some walnut brown hair dye, find a new café and give my little daughter a kiss and tell her about Watergate.

Morgan Payle 2012

Jokes with No Punchline

BY ANGELA BROPHY

“Always go too far because that’s where you’ll find the truth.”

—ALBERT CAMUS

NAT THOMAS likes her jokes quick and dirty... and with a significant bend to the left. In *Yesterday’s News* Nat makes us privy to her wandering eye. For this project she spent weeks filming the newspaper archives held at the State Library of Victoria in pursuit of her own ‘media interests’. The result is a meander through the pages of *The Truth* newspaper from the 1960s and 70s displayed alongside her own archive of newspaper clippings, pasted over the walls in a manner she describes as ‘like the psychotic characters in films — there’s always a wall in their home displaying their collection dedicated to the object of their obsession’. She loves newspapers,

she explains how they’re an absolute bargain for all the entertainment they deliver to your doorstep each day. Her investigation into the media is both absurdist and slapstick, it strays from the path of investigation and side-staggers into the gutter — part Samuel Beckett, part Benny Hill.

Nat uncovers a truth from within the pages of *The Truth*. We all have some recollection of that trashy tabloid. I visualise it in-situ, dissected in a TAB betting room for the racing form guide, or in the company of a beer and its drinker in a front bar at the local. It possesses a degree of absurdity that satirists strive to emulate, and still it curiously occupies a real place within Australia’s print media history. We deftly identify the irony and humour in *The Truth*, the journalistic vulgarity that simply takes things ‘too far’. We cast a critical eye through the mediation of Nat’s lens and she allows us all in on the joke and the unfortunate truth. It was a newspaper marketed to the working class, to a predominantly if not exclusively male readership and owned by Murdoch during the period Nat has selected. It allows us a glimpse into the ideological health of those subsisting on a poor media diet and

draws into consideration the true impact of contemporary equivalent shock jocks, or Andrew Bolt and America’s Fox News.

At its best *The Truth* is humorous and salacious, at worst it elicits hatred and fear. It bypasses conservatism and heads straight to vile misogyny. Here women would never make the status of the Madonna, they’re just simply always the Whore. From the harshest lessons of the 20th century we’ve learned that the most effective propaganda is inherently insidious and undetectable. For us today it is difficult to believe that *The Truth* was ever read compliantly. This exhibition calls into question the general health of all our media and comes in the wake of the *News of the World* scandal and Robert Manne’s *Quarterly Essay: Bad News* documenting the blatant bias of *The Australian* newspaper.¹ We are reminded of the media’s inherent paradox: the essential role it plays in sustaining a healthy democratic society and as an effective tool of capitalist agendas.

Nat is rarely verbose, she reveals all this quite simply through displaying the newspaper headlines, as she explains ‘they’re just jokes with no punchline’.

NAT: What’s the difference between Rupert Murdoch and George W. Bush?

ME: I don’t know, what’s the dif — —

[SILENCE]

ME: Okay... okay, my turn. What’s the difference between *The Australian* and *The Truth*?

SILENCE [LAUGHTER]

NAT: Okay, Okay. What’s the difference between... um... Gina Rinehart and Rupert Murdoch?

[LAUGHTER]²

¹ Robert Manne, *Quarterly Essay 43: Bad News*. Black Inc., Melbourne, September 2011.

² Transcript from a telephone conversation between the artist and the author, February 2012 [may or may not be true].

WHAT A RIGHT ROYAL STUFF UP

(Imaginary rant between RUPERT to WENDI over the morning papers and a macrobiotic brekky)

RUPERT: (furious) That bloody kid. You give them the world; every opportunity, every mentor and he can't even read his bloody emails through to the end. Signs off on our big keep your mouth shut payments without proper discretion because it's not his money! He didn't earn it. Lazy, sloppy work practices, why in my day...

(WENDI nods often in solemn agreement. This is not the start to the day she had hoped for. RUPERT continues, changing up a gear)

RUPERT: This bloody World Wide Web! It's just so darned messy and traceable. I long for the days when all we needed was a shredder in every manager's office. (Wistfully) I loved the noise of those machines...

(They both stare helplessly down at the tropical platters before them, each fruit airlifted in from a more exotic location than the last. WENDI has ordered in all his favourites)

RUPERT: (refocusing) The damage he's done to the brand I've worked up since the Adelaide days... it could be bloody unfixable. Irreparable! They've got the scent of my blood, now they're coming after me. Questioning the influence, the power, and the cups of tea. (Sips some Oolong) On prime time bloody TV! I MAKE the News; I don't want to be on the bloody news! All he had to do was to keep some distance. (Despondently) It's all gone to shit.

(Pauses, then philosophically)

RUPERT: I should've spent more time at home when he was a child. Being the boss's idiot son is not a defence strategy; it's a cop out that plays straight into their hands. Bloody Rundle... The advisors said there was no other option. And just when the pay TV deal was almost through. That's where the real money is.

(Slowly shaking his head, then in a perplexed tone)

RUPERT: I curse that Prince William and his broken ankle.

WENDI: (supportive wife voice, mirroring the tone her analyst uses on their frequent sessions)

What's done is done. Leave it and move forward. Take your blood pressure tablet and remember, they haven't traced the chequebook payments to New York's finest. Just make sure they don't, for all your kids' sakes. America is safe, it's home, (fading off) they still believe in the American Dream...

The British will always be schoolyard bullies; it's passed down to them through those exclusive public schools. They've never liked you; they resent your colonial drive and success. You can't pull the Poms out of the gutter because they like it there. The blasted weather, they can keep their crummy little island to themselves for all I care!

(They grunt in unison. A pregnant pause as RUPERT drinks in WENDI'S feisty indignation. She really is incredible in a crisis he thinks to himself)

WENDI: Follow my advice and start this year with a personal Twitter account. If the public get to know the Rupert I know they will love you just as I do. Let them see the playful Rupert. Talk about your interest in art, movies, culture and politics.

RUPERT: Yes, I will. Oh I do trust you Wendi, I'm just feeling so vulnerable since the trouble erupted. I've been badly let down by those close to me, by family members, but I shouldn't vent on you. You are my rock my love (pause). The flesh of this mango is sublime Wendi. Where did you manage to get mangos at this time of year?

WENDI: I know they are your favourites so I had them flown in from Bowen in Queensland.

Oh love, I'm so sorry, but you weren't to know what was happening over in Blighty. You pay them all too much for this to have gone down. The mismanagement...

RUPERT: How are the girls Chinese lessons coming along?

WENDI: Smashingly. The girls have surpassed the set benchmarks. Rest assured sweet, this is one target that is progressing according to plan. I won't let you down.

It is a hugely complex language and culture...

RUPERT: And a huge market.

My favourite TV shows, as a kid, were Dynasty and Prisoner: Cell Block H. I would have loved to be born into a powerful, wealthy family, tussling with the siblings for parental favouritism, influence and the grand prize. Controls of the Empire, inheriting the legacy to build, then pass on to my own. Prime Ministers and Presidents shuffling appointments to meet at my convenience. Win my support.

My background though is closer to Prisoner, fighting to stay in with the top dog so my head didn't end up in the ironing press.

(Traditional Chinese Orchestra to Play Out. Applause.)

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VICTORIA**



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IMAGE—COVERS FRONT AND BACK:
Nat Thomas *Yesterday's News* 2012
(details)
single channel digital video
36 min 0 sec, dimensions variable
(video stills)
courtesy the artist

GIRL: I PAID \$290 TO BE A VIRGIN AGAIN

But it didn't work'

A tiny dark-eyed Greek girl called Trayani told St. Kilda court this week that she paid \$290 to a Collins Street doctor's cleaning woman to restore her virginity, so that she could fool her fiance into believing she had never had sexual intercourse.

Her boy friend tried to get her out by having intercourse in the Alexandra gardens next day. But the operation had not worked she told the court.

She returned to the cleaning woman's St. Kilda flat and demanded her money back. She was refused. In tears, she went to the police.

At the end of a day's hearing, Mr. Josephs JP sent the cleaning woman, Mrs. Helen Bantaloukas, 24, formerly of Barkly Street, St. Kilda, for trial on a charge of obtaining money by false pretences.

ON BAIL

Mrs. Bantaloukas pleaded not guilty to the \$100 bail charges of which she was granted \$500. She was granted bail for \$500. She was granted bail for \$500. She was granted bail for \$500.



auburn tresses below her shoulders.

She said she came to Australia in 1963. On June 16 she went to 94 Collins St.

MR. VILLENEUVE-SMITH: I ask that the court prohibit publication of this address.

MR. JOSEPHS: I can't see any reason at this stage.

Trayani said she went to see if a doctor would fix her up to make her a virgin again.

She saw a person who gave her a telephone number.

She rang the number and, by appointment, met Mrs. Helen, whom she identified as Mrs. Bantaloukas, outside 94 Collins Street.

She asked Mrs. Bantaloukas if she could put her back as she was before, because she wanted to get married. And how much would it cost?

which was covered by a white sheet.

She saw Mrs. Bantaloukas carrying a small white bottle, but after that she could not see anything.

She felt a bit of pain. Defendant told her not to worry.

She gave the defendant the \$290, and was told to come back on the following Friday.

If the swelling was all right, she could get married.

Defendant gave her four tablets, two white and two pink.

She returned on Friday evening with a friend, Katina Georgiou, who waited in a hallway while she went back to the dining room.

'TRY ME'

Defendant examined her again and said: "You are not fixed very well, but I will give you some medicine and you will be all right."

She paid the defendant \$30, saying she could not get \$20 to make up the \$100.

Defendant told her not to worry about the \$10.

Next day, her boy friend said to her: "I want to try you and see if you are a virgin."

She replied: "Yes, I am."

They had sexual intercourse in a flat at 107 Barkly Gardens, St. Kilda, on the 17th. It was not until the 18th that

Nat Thomas would like to thank Morgan and Maxine Fayle, Angela Brophy, Dan Cass, Elvis Richardson, Adrien Stewart, Karra Rees, Tracey Hubert, Christina Apostolidis, Andrew Burford, Salote Tawale, Lucreccia Quintanilla, Vikki McInnes, Kylie Wilkinson and Colour Factory for their support for this project

told the court - She is Katina Geor-

amount when the operation was done next day. At this stage, the pro-

the knowledge of her this kind of operation common? **DR. E. BELL:** There is

the man she did name. She is money. When Mrs. H... en the "She w... ried. It for me. When... money. ... leakes ... ing ... Ask... ... \$500. She... ch... ... \$1... ... \$1... ... ch... ... present