

THE ENGLISH GOVERNESS AND THE AUSTRALIAN FILM INDUSTRY

ONLY SCREEN AUSTRALIA STANDS BETWEEN US? YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING!

Illusions of that grand first prize are slowly wearing thin. (Rod forever!)

To song as the greatest form of analysis. I enjoyed the Paul Kelly concert on TV last week but also thought how much more I preferred Kasey Chambers. I guess she would probably sink without trace comparatively happily at home. I would certainly not be the first grandma to tell you it's not all bad out here in nappy valley. For example, if you see them once a week and they can also fix your IT quickly as the lot has totally fallen down another great big hole again. How ironic is that? I'd ask US feminist colleague, Betty, but she's dead.

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(A Marxist grandma, aged 70 speaks. See more on www.Carolodonnell.com.au)

QUESTION AND COMPLAINT TO SCREEN AUSTRALIA

My first question and complaint to Screen Australia is: **WHY CAN'T I FIND A FILM MAKER EASILY in my condition when I want one? Is it Screen Australia's fault?** I guess so, in company with related closed associations that easily screen out many better competitors for funds in terms of any regional and related public interest which naturally includes those who can make films. I am hoping to have a short chat about this and related matters later at a Gleebooks launch by Bruce Beresford. Forgotten who that is already? If I could reach him by email with this it would be better. Why are film-makers of any stripe so hard to find? (This is discussed later with reference to troubles Gleebooks has with diverse customers.)

Is **Screen Australia** the only channel through which documentary style film can normally be made and shown on TV in Australia, even if one has highly elevated connexions with highly elevated and comparatively stable US or international film industry interests? Is this right?

I ask the above question since I was told by a film crew working on the street in Glebe Point Road, that I must put in a submission for funding according to the rules of **Screen Australia**. (I would have to be able to find the production skills and willingness first, however. **How?**)

I nevertheless went to the **Screen Australia** website. To me, **Screen Australia** seeks film submissions according to impossible demands. It then provides funds for making a specified few films, without guarantee of their completion. **Screen Australia** then takes the few films which it has commissioned and which have also been completed. This also enables those films to have a viewing platform typically through some cinemas and free to air TV. Screen Australia has the nerve to charge the film producers huge amounts for this "service". Screen Australia appears an example of fatly constipated bureaucratic waste. Am I right?

Screen Australia appears to play a monolithic role in controlling and reducing Australian film production with detrimental effects on Australian film and related employment, education or other community interest. Why can't I get my film made in a way that

makes sense from my perspective as a retired public servant who commissioned many films for state government purposes, and as a retired Sydney University academic?

From its website I learn **Screen Australia** is a Federal Government agency charged with supporting Australian screen development, production and promotion. I guess the state government arms have similar functions. They appear to be growing state bureaucracies designed to suppress film not made exactly to their specifications. Is this the case? It seems a wrong approach to Australian service development as its stress is on bureaucratic closure. This always tries to reduce its workload by screening out potential content on spurious grounds, while adding new categories of supposed funding which are expensive to administer and service. **Screen Australia** and its state arms appear to be an overarching key producer and industry reducing ogre, posing as an industry benefactor. Jesus save us?

Screen Australia apparently thinks what they do helps Australian producers. Why? Is this driven by old fashioned approaches to trade and association, which divest the public of rational services, rather than pursuing them? Funding instrumentalities appear to be good at making up new funding models and requirements yet comparatively poor about getting struggling film-makers opportunity to be watched by audiences in Australia or overseas.

My key complaint is that **Screen Australia**, the state industry representative funding body, appears to be dysfunctional in its bureaucratic construction so that it destroys a great deal of potential film production, screening and archival matter for research, including mine. Superficially, from personal experience and reading Australian websites, the Australian film industry appears to be a place where nobody without top US connexions can make money or pursue other values, unless they already have enduring relations with **Screen Australia**.

I come to this view as a former academic book author and teacher and as a retired public servant. In the NSW state public service role, from 1985-95 I commissioned many films on employment equity matters and work-related hazard reduction, while others were firmly resisted as men preferred stuff to be in their heads. Parents give out information more honestly and freely and teachers should try to. Let us start film from that ideal population basis. I was shocked as a teenager to realize how men bottle up their information and saw early that the best way to deal with the culture as a more emotionally acceptant woman would be to open it up to more scrutiny in comparatively good communities. I fear Asian and African men may be a lot worse for geographic and historical family reasons and associations. That is not racist. It is a question of mutual search for better development.

As a retiree from Sydney University since 2007 I want to make the attached film by finding an experienced but diverse group of people who seek to share their knowledge and skills in a joint venture. The starting joint venture of which I write has many moving parts, starting with a film and discussion of the Australian exhibition **in 2015** called **Girls at the Tin Sheds: Sydney feminist posters 1975-90**. This is part of a proposed regional film and fund approach discussed later and attached. It demonstrates some key regional and historical questions to be tackled in the development of central and peripheral regional economies. Maynard Keynes and JK Galbraith tackled the lawyer problems most humorously and tactfully. Then it stopped. Like Shakespeare, however, Marx and Engels will never die. I

speak as a Marxist grandma who naturally thinks Jews rule the world, starting with Marx and Engels. In theory as distinct from practice, I think Freud is the best we have got. He certainly taught me an enormous amount about my own construction, which is how I judge.

The film '**Whither the Party? Education, art and cultural revolutions,**' tells the regional film Story of Australia in this regional historical context. This attached proposal for shared film development seeks help from regional partners and backers with intent to capitalise on China's digital revolution first. This film is provisionally titled '**Whither the Party? Education, art and cultural revolutions**'. It expects Chinese education policy and practice today will be discussed and compared by artists, teachers and others in the Chinese and Australian hindsight of education policy and practice at the supposed end of Chinese cultural revolution in 1976, when Xhou En Lai and Mao died.

The Chinese art exhibition, **China and Revolution: History, parody and memory in contemporary art** and the Australian art exhibition, **Girls at the Tin Sheds: Sydney feminist posters 1975-90**, were at local art galleries in 2010 and 2015 respectively. Both provide excellent visual material for exploring the relevance of the Chinese Communist Party policy and practice in education in 1976, compared with today. Visual communication and experience help learning, whether up to some standards or not. Please help me to develop a film like this attached proposal.

Personally, I am hugely proud of Germaine Greer and the women at the Tin Sheds who produced the art services to the community through Sydney University institutions and in other places. Remember, *the way to a woman's heart is through her masochism?* (Jesus, Baby, it surely must have been?) I speak as a woman who had a vision of Germaine Greer as Governor General so set up the Get Germaine Greer for Governor General Group (GGGGGG). She declined gracefully in public at her Gleebooks launch and we instead got grandma Quentin Bryce from the Queensland bush with multiple kids and hats. Yet another Catholic lawyer. Almost none were women when I was a lass. I'd rather have their typing and writing without all the other legal, feudally controlling, lot. When I look at Kevin Rudd's giant autobiography I feel the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. By the size of the book he has recorded every sparrow fart but isn't even dead yet. (It's a pity as I truly loved him and his communications policy direction. I ask if it is being followed but nobody replies.)

The attached proposal for a film entitled '**Whither the Party? Education, art and cultural revolutions,**' is discussed again later in the light of more recent regional developments of which Australia is inextricably part. It is shape or be shaped in this world, as Humpty Dumpty observed regarding his keen mastery of words to Alice. First, however, let us address the Sydney Morning Herald Spectrum Cover Story '**Feminist Firestorm**' by Alexis Soloski (SMH 18-19.2017) for regional film direction. This covers a historic 1971 Panel at Town Hall in Manhattan New York, marketed as a debate on women's liberation. Look online and see the wonderful address Greer made, caught in full on a Spanish website. To see it is to see the Australian anarcho-feminist view which has demonstrably been best for me and other women in Australia, according to common experience in the house of mirth.

The Wooster Group's production of **The Town Hall Affair** will run in January as part of the Sydney Festival. After seeing how America has changed in my lifetime, I wouldn't miss it. Note that Soloski's article was originally in the New York Times. I grew up with the view that art is something men give to their wives and kids to play with. I now see it as far more, especially since the information technology revolution has been driving everything faster to the next global financial crash. Art is the centre of the feudal loans experience linked with land and property acquisition now on line. This is a key threat to public green space. The usual building preferences are for giant public or private buildings and retail ownerships.

Whither existing rents in old high street shops like Glebe Point Road? Up and up? Qui bono? (as the lawyers say.) The fate of books and people like me in this property and technology driven age is addressed later with a view to the expression of fund management principles based on those introduced to Australia in health care in the 1980s. Extensions of this regional planning and fund management approach require consideration everywhere they may be held in contract aims or voted. Gleebooks, has been the heart of our intellectual community in Glebe and many environs. Its fate is questioned later in a world where books appear to be cheaper and cheaper. I fear the closure of Gleebooks in an environment which appears so ripe for assisting film dissemination better, as with books.

The attached film entitled '**Whither the Party? Education, art and cultural revolutions,**' is designed to tackle related regional issues. One's primary goals are historical preservation and research of cultural and environment features of the land and coast, through jobs, education, and joyous entertainment. Eco-tourism, which means tourism well conducted to preserve the place, is central to the development of the related global ethos.

Baby, however, I have to tell you that their open mirth is not the normal lawyer's feudal lot. This goes on forever and they always come out on top through identification with their top feudal associations, closures and supports. This is also funny as lawyers have never been out of the closet legally, sexually speaking, before now. Should one care if more women are in there at the public trough with the lawyers today, whether they are lesbians, or not?

I dunno. However, I want to know if they are married and to whom, as the institution looks a lot like insider trading, especially as women imagine it to be. Help us open these matters up, Hortense, as women at the tin sheds did in the unmistakably Australian exhibition in **2015** called **Girls at the Tin Sheds: Sydney feminist posters 1975-90**. (You've got your own cigarette, now, Baby. You've come a long, long way? Question Mao again to find out.)

As I recall this was first noted as an industrial issue at Sydney University. The question then was whether Marxist and feminist perspectives were suitable for inclusion in philosophy courses and the answer was to split the department into traditional and modern groups. Like Greer, I expect, I would speak with the latter group, but I was a high school English teacher in Nigeria and Melbourne at the time. As a Marxist grandma of seventy years, I

naturally start life in film and song again with Marx and Engels and believe Jews rule the world. Chomski's grandma and I always tried to get on with neighbours, however. This is why we often ask 'How's Mao today? and film the lot.' (If he is dead they are not telling us.)

When I started work in the NSW Department of Industrial Relations and Employment in 1985, all departmental knowledge was firmly and purposefully locked in men's heads and they were also keepers of all files. All information was kept secret from all but the lawyers swooping down on the building. Whose public service was that? Make use of the film gift better for all, as began in those earlier days of 1985 with some plain English writing, where knowledge had to be wrestled from men's heads to put down on paper and spread it. The most cherished and highly policed fantasies of corporate, bureaucratic and academic life are that the higher salary will always outperform the lower one, and the post-graduate student will outperform the undergraduate one. In the real world, that is often rubbish because the lower net is clearly spread far more widely than the upper one. In this national context the identification of quality is often moot and film is a vital quality evidentiary tool now present. It seems that the way the Australian film industry is set up wastes many valuable resources.

In the current global and Australian context note the apparently opposing positions presented by Lachlan Murdoch in the article "*Fox survives vote: Can it survive Netflix?*" and that of the Deputy Vice Chancellor of the University of Technology Sydney, Shirley Alexander, in *Content not king as new ways rule*. Both articles were in the Australian Financial Review (AFR 17.11.17, pages 24 and 13). Murdoch states there is a lot of talk about the growing problem of scale in the media industry. He said "*sub-scale players*" are finding it difficult to leverage their position into new and emerging video platforms and that he wanted to be very clear that his business interests were not in that category. Alexander, however, appears to think that *any class that could be replaced by a video should be*. One ponders how prospective film makers ideally could or should fit in for general benefit. The attempt made here to initiate some key film production is to address key industry problems. They are that everything appears geared to applying for funds and teaching further, rather than using knowledge from diverse regional contexts to better effect for all beneficiaries.

ABC TV channel 2 is directed to kids and parents. Other channels have comparatively reliable news and SBS TV is a multicultural language and translation set-up. Radio is attached. Such channels and key national newspapers provide a lifelong spine to meet our national interest. Americans crushed this by design in their own country with 'fake news' as a result. This is an important time to reconstruct something better or lose our trump card.

SOME APPARENT PROBLEMS WITH THE AUSTRALIAN FILM INDUSTRY STRUCTURE

The **Screen Australia** website states it *aims to help the businesses within our home-grown screen industry by supporting their growth. In doing so, more Australians will be able to see more of their multi-faceted country and unique Australian perspectives on the world reflected in the stories on their screens.* It seems suspicious that the term **screen industry**,

rather than *film industry* has been adopted by the current producers. I guess this primarily helps US business rather than Australians.

The **Screen Producers Association** describes itself as an association of *leading screen content creators*. Why blur the more clearly rational lines of film production by conflating them with screens and distribution? This seems to favour a mistaken form of industry protection which undermines Australian strengths. These strengths, like Australian health care, ideally rely on Australia's comparatively strong spine of honest and reliable national statistics, news broadcasting in ABC and SBS TV and radio and in key national newspapers.

Related problems of squandered opportunity for work, payment and experience are addressed in the attached response to the **City of Sydney** in regard to its **Open and Creative City Planning for culture and the night time economy**. One refers to the **NSW Government Office of Local Government** draft **Code of Conduct for Local Councils**, and the **Code of Sydney Uni. Sport and Fitness (SUSF)**. The sports code has a central concept of the customer being bound by the code whether they like it or not. The code is then wielded apparently at will against the customer by counter staff whose mates appear naturally to back them up. I gain the strong impression that **Screen Australia** also works like that.

The term "**Screen**" rather than "**Film**" (production, distribution and archiving) appears unhelpfully misleading for Australian and regional film development, storage, dissemination and viewing. I have discussed such matters before on www.Carolodonnell.com.au.

One refers also to matters raised by famous Australian film maker Gillian Armstrong in the article *'Film industry unites against foreign threat'* (Sydney Morning Herald, 18.9.2017 p.10). I question her apparently common industry stance that the general industry associations design is in the interests of the people who make a film and those who may find out about it and be able to watch or purchase it. The reverse is the case. God knows who funds it as usual? We were surely here before, with **The Producers?** Jews are funny and split down the middle? They bear feudal contradictions rooted in our very being so the only way to deal with them is to be as openly honest as possible. I back women in this.

Whether women appear in a position to play major parts in action, however, is another story. The boys appear to hold filming reins through legal technological, sports and other driving and control, involving families. Humour is often designed to pick apart normal social contradictions or exploit them. Free to air TV has had greater actual and potential roles in education and entertainment since so much was revealed more clearly to many of us after the global financial crisis in 2008. I can't comment on commercial stations as the **Sopranos** has been my sole commitment. This was due to its superbly written understanding, rarely found elsewhere. In old age I relish reading, or great film or documentary on TV, or writing. I am afraid of the unknown people poised to take away easier access to these great goods.

Many film associations appear to labour under an illusion, based on their dysfunctional but legal attitudes to intellectual property. This appears wrongly designed to be owned and exploited in comparative mutual ignorance of any broader potential. The identification of higher quality lies in broader regional planning, where quality may or may not be deemed to be primarily for development to some standard or not. It may lie in the eye of the beholder, or not, depending on the case. The key point in film delivery is surely to start any news with the democratic ideals of openness and truth. From this nationally more open perspective there are far better consultative models of operation than the submissions based funding model. This is discussed again later in regard to population services and **Screen Australia**.

The film industry illusion generally appears to be that the association service is necessarily acting in the members' interests and presumably in any related populations' interest. This is not the case because the approach is driven by technological and professional associations, not more broadly open regional ones, globally and locally. The evidence is presented here that the Australian film industry needs reformation to support Australians and their trading partners better, including film-makers and others. I pursue this film to make the point.

How should I go about finding people who are comparatively technologically skilled in film to find some interested in making the attached movie, which has a regional policy rationale? Why is it so hard for me to find such people? Please point me in their direction clearly.

From purely personal experience and related research, it seems to me that few people with a modicum of money and experience can make a film, unless they appear in fortunate relationships already. Such relationships appear to be those with the state, embodied in **Screen Australia**. Does this suit all the allied associations of subcontractors, or just a few?

The Australian film industry appears badly set up so that members or employees protect past associations which appear increasingly dysfunctional with age. In the article *'Film industry unites against foreign threat'* (SMH, 18.9.2017 p.10) film maker Gillian Armstrong, most famous for 'My Brilliant Career' and in Australia also for her documentaries about the lives of women, discusses the threatened diminution of local high-quality content on TV. Her documentary films about women were exceptionally good, which means honest to me in this case. Armstrong states she didn't think of following in the footsteps of Scorsese and Spielberg partly as she was a woman and partly as there was no Australian film industry then. On the other hand, I immediately and strongly identified in Australia with Deborah Kerr, Julie Andrews, Audrey Hepburn and Doris Day. Ado Annie wasn't much of a stretch.

We are born in this US film. I would be the last to deny its value, especially since I was thrilled to see how it was born inside an old Spanish synagogue. A few peers, however, are not the only pebbles on the beach. One speaks as a Marxist grandma trying to get the attached film made at last. I would also like to see a re-make of **My Brilliant Career** to reflect the real horror of the book. It seemed to me to be about the unspoken effects of the serious molestation or rape of an impoverished child with many siblings by her alcoholic father, and perhaps by other men, when the family was trapped in drought in the Australian bush. Armstrong's film was a brightly romantic story. This is not necessarily to deny it in any way. It was internationally famous, provided a lot of work and made a lot of money.

The book of praise, **Margaret and David 5 Stars** (2017), is one “*in which Australian film makers, critics, distributors and festival directors pay tribute to Australia’s most loved critics*”. I too relied on their TV program for all information about film for many years. We all were sad to see it disappear from the screen. Why not replace them? The makers of the world acclaimed indigenous film, **Samson and Delilah**, which I saw in the cinema and again on TV, state Margaret and David’s program represented “*an absolute object lesson in how to support, invigorate, change and inspire an entire nation’s film culture*”. I agree but assume there are many unknowns who may be just as good and cheaper as historically well-informed presenters. We’ve seen a lot of great new people since free to air TV expanded. I relied upon this film service and see new movies less often now as I won’t risk the unknown.

In “**Film industry unites against foreign threat**” Armstrong states her message is that without eternal vigilance local content is always at risk. This is especially so, however, when **Screen Australia** and others silently refuse to deal unless one becomes a member of each association, or else, like **Screen Australia**, bludgeon all film applicants at the start with their controlling requirements for any TV showing. This closing of channels is the wrong way to go about film production. Armstrong’s apparent obsession with owning our own particular culture rather than some broader regional truth also appears seriously misplaced. (Let only those who want to do so focus on mass or other entertainment driven by a few producers.)

Americans only drive us down further with their product selling interests unless we bear some countervailing force which ideally lies in our comparatively intelligent state, not in lawyers. In their driving process they also increase the dysfunctional nature of Australian film copyright. Compare book production and retrieval potential with film production and retrieval. Australian film seems like the scattering of confetti to the wind in comparison.

In this regional film, education and planned work context, also see an alarming article entitled ‘Gillard on board as start-up takes off’ in the Australian Financial Review (AFR 14.11.17, Technology). As former PM Gillard declined to discuss her role in assessing investments in this vehicle, one wonders if she knows what she is doing. Why should she? The firm has backed, for example, “*an African developer and education start-up Andela and IConcern, an application that claims to use artificial and human intelligence to help predict the impact of natural disaster*”. The Australian public has a right to know what Gillard thinks she is doing. One has only to follow the comparative development of Africa and China since 1970 to see many inconvenient truths against legal perspectives Gillard represents. One wonders what has happened to injured clients of her old law firm, for example, as partners joined the international finance and insurance arena. (Lost in space?)

THE AUSTRALIAN FILM INDUSTRY IS POORLY DESIGNED FOR ITS SUPPOSED SERVICE

Film production is a service. The book ***Caring for Australia’s Children: Political and industrial issues in child care*** (Brennan and O’Donnell 1986) showed the submissions based

model of funding services is a highly inequitable issue of taxpayer funds to wealthy suburbs with comparatively few children, unless local government steps in to direct the submissions to their ultimate ends in housing and caring for children, based on the numbers in need. Nevertheless, because political and associated pork-barrelling is endemic, and also represents secure, high paid public service empires and jobs, the submissions model of funding as key driver continues in the way that government operates at all levels.

More intelligent film planning should broaden the film services, in the interests of diverse and high-quality product which is available to anybody who can find out about its existence and significance for viewing or purchase. We are born in film. Australians have little understanding of how drenched we are in US ideology, and not any other kind. I have seen this fucking movie before. I am not poor and want to make the questioning film attached.

However, there is no way I could commit to the completely unrealistic requirements of **Screen Australia** submission and funding demands, in spite of being able to commit \$50,000 and free labour to any pot, common or not. I persist with this effort strongly nevertheless as Australia will need to find a middle way between Chinese and US development directions.

The alternative appears to be to remain distressingly stupid about the way to manage our film-makers assets and related potential viewing or retail sale. Surely filmmakers should be able to opt in or out of this system. It currently appears to drive them to be exploited mainly by interests not our own as a nation. This is while we watch many small domestic businesses fail which could instead have been a greater part of the intellectual development of all. See more about intellectual property issues on www.Carolodonnell.com.au This is not a new international idea and I wish it was clearer. It would be if it wasn't for all the professional approaches ignoring broader evidence bases. This way forward was first established by the World Health Organization in 1946 and supplemented by the International Declaration of Human Rights which nations and regions may or may not embrace for many good and bad reasons. We always end in feudal lawyers.

Over many years, ABC and SBS TV have set national standards on news and truth seeking with a global reach very well. I would hate to see them weakened by many more US propaganda institutions and products of questionable origin and content, as I have repeatedly pointed out in university related contexts. They may automatically follow instead the interests of close theoretical association, whether this appears to be in the public interest or not. Donald Trump and I agree there is lot of fake news around today. However, **Screen Australia** appears to be not just throwing most film babies out with the bath water, but also killing many other and potentially better ones before and after a bath.

The expansion of TV channels under the Rudd government was a potentially great development for Australia, ideally to meet diverse regional needs, including writing and film making first for a variety of healthy and sustainable reasons. Only some TV channels

disappoint so far. In general, we have felt greatly enriched in news and also as parents watching ABC Channel 2 for kids, without the pester power advertising which makes them so fat and creates family disharmony. Related discussions are attached for better regional relationships between recreation and sport, taking the socially dysfunctional relations at Sydney University Sport and Fitness (SUSF) as a horrible example. (See later and attached.)

OPENING REGIONAL SKILL RELATIONSHIPS MORE BROADLY APPEARS VITAL

Australia appears a place where very few who have a modicum of money and experience can make a film (let alone have it shown on TV, in cinemas, educational institutions or other places), unless they appear in comparatively strong and fortunate relationships already. These appear to be highly protected, expensive spots. We watch TV. Why deny it as a reliable national spine of comparatively diverse and reputable regional knowledge?

Don't we all want to be The Producers? Why do I feel you don't want that for me? So stupid and unfair. Better regional industry directions are addressed below and attached.

As a former NSW public servant devoted for many years to communicative action in Australian work arenas I commissioned many films from 1985-95. As a member of the Faculty of Health Sciences at Sydney University until I retired in 2007 I tried to get other films made and services met with students, always hindered by the institutional format. Nevertheless, two were produced for Tropfest and "Carol" is on www.Carolodonnell.com.au

I am a shorthand typist and writer by long training so I don't wish to film or undertake associated areas of production or distribution in other ways. I know that such written composition and typing skills are vital for nearly all good production, however they may be treated, which is often ignored. Nevertheless, these skills gradually promoted me, if not to the top of my tree, at least up to a point where I can count myself ahead of Virginia Woolfe by three storeys. I have a PhD and had four books published by international publishers on women and children's protection, work and education concerns, for example. I read on my top storey. I write on my second storey. I watch TV on the bottom storey. (They never phone, they never write, etc. etc. See more about me on www.Carolodonnell.com.au)

One doesn't like to mention the full ownership of a Glebe town house and equity in other property. However, land and construction appear vitally related to the direction and cost of all business. Rising rental costs coupled with lower product costs appear to be having a disastrous effect in retail, where driving technologies and their operational difficulties also appear intent on sinking all boats together, not raising them. As a result, I also fear for local bookshops I love. Their linked book and film dissemination powers are addressed later.

Where do I find other people with time on their hands who might make this film with me? Are they all bound up with their various dysfunctional associations while the **National Film and Sound Archive** struggles against the odds to fulfil many wrongly directed functions?

GIRLS AT THE TIN SHEDS: THE IGNORED BUT MORE POWERFUL ANTITHESIS OF MAMBO

I am first pinning hopes on a shorter film centred on the 2015 Australian art exhibition, **Girls at the Tin Sheds: Sydney feminist posters 1975-90**. It might stand alone and be called **'The Antithesis of Mambo'**, or not, as the case may be. The justification and Mambo reference are entered into further later. This Girls at the Tin Sheds development is based on a more broadly feminist consciousness and action. Whatever the title, help me for the rational film industry development reasons discussed attached and on www.Carolodonnell.com.au

The **Girls at the Tin Sheds** story ought to be told quickly now because its artistic and sexual role was central to a wide variety of small and gradual social movements and changes in the Australian state and delivery of services which formerly worked to male feudal assumptions, also starting at the top with lawyers. The Girls at the Tin Sheds story easily appears more wide-reaching and significant as organised and inclusive community and state sets of influence, than, for example, Mambo t-shirt production. The film **"Mambo – Art irritates life"** from male, anarchist, surfer, stables, was last shown on ABC TV again on 7.11.2017.

I will meet soon with Professor Toni Robertson, a most admired artist, whose work is on the cover of the **Girls at the Tin Sheds** exhibition book, for example. She is currently Adjunct Professor, School of Software in Human Centred Technology Design at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS). She is interested today, according to her website, in issues surrounding the use of technology in actual work and social settings, discussed attached. Katrina Liberiou, Curatorial Assistant, University Art Collection, University Museums has been helpful with providing exhibition and background files. Who will film the material? It seems that effort in the industry is being channelled into training for production and seeking funds, rather than on effectively supporting film production work and film dissemination.

The larger proposed film discussed attached, **'Whither the Party? Education, art and cultural revolutions'** is a related film undertaking first justified in the broadly international, regional and local terms in which the driving digital revolution also appears as a key part. It therefore should be designed and fitted to produce the widest possible access to reliable knowledge to use it to best advantage. Australian Medicare and related health care service providers are highly experienced in these vital service matters, whereas film-makers are not. Compared with Australian books, the storage and access systems for Australian films appear to be worse than the average Cambodian consumer of international film could imagine, for example. See related issues discussed in the attached letters file.

Stephanie Hemelryk Donald, who was curator of the Chinese exhibition and now Professor of Contemporary Film and Cultural Studies in the UNSW School of Humanities and Languages showed early interest in this film but has now withdrawn. I note the article entitled **'Writer fears great pall of China as book ditched'** in the Sydney Morning Herald (13.11.17 p. 1). Clive Hamilton, a professor of public ethics (?) at Charles Sturt University

has had a book called **“Silent Invasion: How China is Turning Australia into a Puppet State”** pulled back from publication by Allen and Unwin for fear of offending Chinese. This is a good reason to support **‘Whither the Party? Education, art and cultural revolutions’**. Australians need to understand what the Marxist perspective entails. As Ernie Dingo says, *“They might think they do, but they don’t”*. (Taps head and thinks of Hamilton and women.)

As a Marxist grandma, I started my working life in the state as a Marxist and a friend of China. As I recall, Hamilton started his working life as a married Christian. I don’t know where he is now, theoretically speaking, but this film is a different kettle of fish. Many Chinese, Europeans, Asians and others outside the US embrace Marx and Engels analysis for a development start and I do too. Australians wouldn’t know what it involves, including Hamilton. Any person who wants to engage honestly with China shouldn’t fear this film. Journalists go into more dangerous territory every day. I have always been aware I lack the courage of the investigative journalist and admire them a lot. Lawyers are feudally costly.

How many of the so-called China experts embrace the Marxist theoretical language of Mao? There are not many I bet. To be Marxist would be very bad for travelling in any English-speaking career path in which the US universities have increasingly dominated the world through their scholarly associations and related funding links. I spent my working life often wondering why Australia seemed always seeking intellectual leadership from Americans in areas where Australian health and social service outcomes were demonstrably superior. Australia is in danger of linking the worst of worlds via the US capacity to mine the English-speaking world to its advantage, while maintaining its many nostalgic closed union ties. (Baby, they never know or speak ill of each other today. It’s not good for business.)

THE DOMINATION OF THE TEACHING AND TECHNOLOGY CLASSES

Film making, distribution, archiving and retrieval to meet the public and creative interest are naturally focused upon first in developing Australian direction in company with Asian neighbours and the rest. Has the film industry grown wild like Topsy? How does it deliver through its normal associations with academe where life is usually so much more regular, better paid and reliable in the office and classroom – up off the film tools. I dunno. However, I expect that Wendy Bacon and Chris Nash, formerly of UTS, know a lot about it.

I wonder if Chris Nash would make this film on Mao with me, for example. Wendy can obviously join in at will. My neighbour, Olivier Pollett, made a great film called *“Canning Paradise”* about development in Papua New Guinea. His supervisor in this project was Chris Nash, who has made many films in his journalistic and academic career. His book **‘What is Journalism? The Art and Politics of a Rupture’** (2016) argues journalism should treat itself academically as a discipline on a par with history, geography and sociology, and as an art form in its own right. I can only agree with this but the book cost \$100 and appears heavy theoretical going. It appears primarily to appeal to the interests of particular theoretical elites in universities, instead of more broadly. Narrow professional elites may well be

considered to be also corrupting the film business by turning it into a comparatively closed profession based on certification rather than recognizing wider merit more openly.

The film **'Carol'** www.Carolodonnell.com.au is 20 minutes long. I tried to pay a person on an hourly basis from the local community hall computer group to make it with me. He soon failed to turn up to deliver or explain why. Another person from the group, a retired French civil engineer, kindly stepped in free to help me so that my film could be made before Xmas. The way to make a better film productively, I guess, is commonly with a division of labour. (Or, to put it another way, "Where is my fucking division of labour" to make this film?)

'Carol' is a film we made together freely as amateurs. In my estimation we contributed roughly 50% each in value towards the finished product. It is important to me to state this, as I think the method of film making which Jean-Pierre and I used is far more productive, rational and cheap, than the method of film-making for complete novices which I was subjected to at TAFE college, and which appears also to be reflected in the 20min. film he showed me, made recently for the Ultimo Community Centre (?) with a government grant.

The technical and further education (TAFE) and grant funding model leaves the tech.-heads always running the film gig and pads the production costs with too much filming and typing up inessentials driven by the comparatively mindless subject interview and response.

The same thing is happening in interview based university research which in the Faculty of Health Sciences was also treated in a comparatively mindless quantitative/qualitative research dichotomy. The latter involved interviewing a handful of people in a comparatively bland, thoughtless and random way; then typing the comparatively thoughtless and random answers into a computer. This takes a huge amount of time for anybody not trained as a shorthand typist already. It's the typing part and product which holds up the analysis. This often requiring torturing the typed words with a computer program (NVIVO?) to search for key words. The natural alliances between the desires of psychologists to be seen as scientific, and the desires of software companies to sell them products so they can turn stuff into numbers, have found a home in academia which multiplies itself more snugly every day. This ignores more rational use of statistics by comparatively expert groups like the Australian Bureau of Statistics. If this is the normal style innovation, give me an umbrella.

In such "qualitative" research approaches, often following their big sister "quantitative" direction, the particular social and environmental context of the researcher and researched appear unknown. What took place between them is a commercial mystery as well, because the numbers are expected to influence further research and sale of software that later professionals put typed words into; turning them into numbers. Voila, we are all grown up. The results of our labour in an academic institution may be published in a professional journal, if we are lucky, and sold back to the employing institution at outrageous prices. If one commences with regional approaches rather than technologically driven professional

ones based on the assumptions of the driving US market, one may save a lot of time and money while coming up with better answers. This is why we should also link Mao and film.

Typical US expected production flounders under technical direction where a typist (who is not formally recognized but supposedly vital to the process) ends up sick and exhausted so production may languish unfinished. Something produced this way is at the mercy of the intellectual capacity and direction of the IT crowd which systematically diminishes potential contributions outside its personal club. This is so whether the expected product is a film or an analysis based on interviewing a group of people without any broader and more intellectually advanced recognition of their construction. The torturing of the typed speech with some computer product is not a substitute for more intelligent thought and time spent in other ways. There are better things to do than spend time typing dross. Listen to it all and preserve the record. Analyse the speech and pick out concepts to be matched in film. This also provides time for wider bases of association and environmental understanding.

START THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROCESS WITH FILMING GIRLS AT THE TIN SHEDS

As an old woman who has read, written and watched TV ceaselessly throughout life, I know the proposed film **'Whither the Party? Education, art and cultural revolutions'**, discussed attached, should be made. It represents a key change in Australian policy direction to meet and shape regional production forces which residents cannot easily avoid meeting. This change is exemplified in the art of the Australian exhibition **in 2015** called **Girls at the Tin Sheds: Sydney feminist posters 1975-90**. It was curated by Katie Yuill, who previously worked at Sherman Galleries. Dr Ann Stephen, Senior Curator, University Art Gallery and Art Collection assisted her. I would like to start with contacting those women who made the posters for the exhibition to ask if they would allow them be filmed for the proposed movie and whether they would like to contribute in other ways to the project proposed.

In this post-war historical context of increasing women's access to higher education, our Australian religious and state structures were being newly questioned on many fronts, predominantly under Catholic, US and British influences, when I was a tertiary teacher and student. Earlier, as a child in a British immigrant family with a new TV in Brisbane, for example, we usually watched B.A. Santamaria, then Ed Murrow, then Bertrand Russell on the same day. Australia gave the whole family a clearer global context for understanding than most countries I guess, where feudal and business relations appear more firmly and historically entrenched. I respected education in this country and valued it greatly. My critical stance to it is a product of it, like my relationship with my father and mother. I fear that in universities today students are more driven in directions where they are taught to elevate themselves somehow above more experienced understanding on the ground. In my view this is often bad for all as theoretical operation is increasingly divorced from practice.

The Girls in the Tin Sheds mode of belief and operation was centred on practice and service.

After reading the article by Alexis Soloski entitled "**Feminist Firestorm**", reprinted from the New York Times, in the Sydney Morning Herald Spectrum magazine (November 18-19, 2017, p.4) I went to clips on-line to revisit the speeches that Germaine Greer and others made at the famous New York event in 1971. This was apparently the subject of the film **Town Bloody Hall**, made by Chris Hedegus and D.A. Pennebaker in 1979. I will explore this.

On the Spanish site, Greer speaks most eloquently, as she so often did, in praise of the artist who has no ego and no name. This is ideally the starting place which links my history and concerns also to those of the Girls at the Tin Sheds at Sydney University. It is illuminated in a consciousness of service shaped by male ideologies and institutions which often appear naturally detrimental to more regionally and culturally inclusive futures. This common critique may be summed up, for example, in Marie McMahon's terrific poster for the **Dead God Dance** at the Balmain Town Hall. Mary stands on the world, clasping a shotgun with which she has shot through the heart of God and cherubs above on the ceiling. She looks helplessly and clumsily embarrassed by the gun and as if she wants to get rid of it soon.

There was never a better moment to go back to Mao and Greer, in my opinion. I feel sure George Orwell will never be lost. (I saw Chinese pre-schoolers doing a song and dance routine suspiciously like "Ánimal Farm" in a teachers and students tour of China in 1976.)

I have wanted to make a film on these women artists at the **Tin Sheds** since 1985 when I set up the first Women's Directorate in the NSW Department of Industrial Relations and Employment with Juliet Richter, and began commissioning films from that spot with other women. When I entered the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Sydney as a teacher in 1995 I had another mild go at pursuing a film based on this artistic service vision, before becoming entrenched with some amateur student film interests in health care and Tropfest. I was thrilled to see the exhibition **Girls at the Tin Sheds: Sydney feminist posters 1975-90** shown in 2015 as I believed in the importance of its clear, straightforward vision.

When I first read Germaine Greer's account of life in "**The Female Eunuch**" I was a young secondary school teacher in a Northern Nigerian boys high school. A copy went like wildfire around an expatriate set of female teachers in Kano, who urged it on their menfolk. To watch clips on-line of Germaine Greer and other feminist opinion leaders in 1971 or later is to be reminded that humour is a two-edged sword promoting or avoiding critical thought.

The relationships made between writing, film-making, viewing and acquisition in this country could support the population, including artists, much better in free to air TV. For example, Raoul Peck's film on James Baldwin led me to reread a lot of his work in old age, where the intervening years have led to anti-discrimination legislation and the expanding territory of the gun to fit any market, married or not. The DVD is out. As a constant Australian reader, writer and watcher of TV throughout life, I fear greatly that our great local historic bookstores will soon close down now. Is stock sold out the back or pulped?

Diminished potential consumer knowledge and access to film product are not inevitable. They appear to be the direct result of the dysfunctional way the Australian film industry appears set up. Like Dick Smith, I find ABC TV coverage of immigration poor. Policies on birth, immigration and death need other scrutiny in film for the good of current and future generations. As a Marxist grandma I want to make the film attached partly to fill the gap. Who else with skills is willing? How do I find them? We need skills before money but wonder where they are. Technology appears geared to raising money rather than practice.

I leave you with an expanded version below of the earlier letter I wrote to Gleebooks after the proprietor, David Gaunt, wrote an open email asking one of his friends and customers to desist with his promotional and questioning behaviour related to East Timor at a recent book launch. Jonathan also responded by email and I recommended direction below. I hope you will encourage your particular associations to develop in this regional direction. In this context I wonder about the best way to get in contact with Bruce Beresford to see if he is interested in being involved in making the film attached. I will do so through Gleebooks!

Cheers, Carol O'Donnell, St James Court, 10/11 Rosebank St., Glebe, Sydney 2037
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Hi

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO BOB GOULD'S BOOK ARCADE AND CRUCIAL GLEEBOOKS SERVICE NEAR SYDNEY UNI? HOW SHOULD IT BE MANAGED FOR THE COMMUNITY BENEFIT?

WILL BRUCE BERESFORD OR OTHER SUITABLE PERSONS ON THE GLEEBOOKS DATA BASE HELP MAKE THE FILM ATTACHED?

Although it has played an important role in intellectual matters for many years Gleebooks is a bookshop, not a public university or public square where passionate dissenting speech is historically expected and often welcomed on principle. Gleebooks can and should ask its customers to respect its deemed business needs, whatever they are, which also appear hard enough to meet already in the current environment. Why should others be turned off?

Personally, I would like to understand more about Gleebooks customer base and how it might support the effective utilization of the stock of Bob Gould's huge second-hand bookshop in Newtown. This is a totally different kettle of fish to Gleebooks because of its huge, more historic and sectional interests which look likely to be lost to rubble soon.

The suburb of Glebe, where I live, is full of students, academics and tourists passing through for greater or lesser periods. A few may stay on to settle down with locals. University suburbs seem obvious places to develop greater understanding of the local and national history and culture rather than trashing it, whether one considers the subject nationally or in regard to some smaller regional arena. Books are getting cheaper and cheaper at Gleebooks. Will the shop disappear next and the service in new and/or second-hand books be lost? I would be most unhappy with that as reading is my key cheap and reliable pleasure in life besides TV and writing. There are people everywhere who love books.

In this context I am particularly concerned first by the fate of the historic forerunner to Gleebooks in terms of fostering intellectual advance locally, in Australia and more broadly. Gould's book arcade is described in the article 'Last chapter for Gould's book arcade' in the Sydney Morning Herald 1.11.2017. It was in Goulburn Street for many years before moving to Newtown. Three decades of readers have browsed the estimated 1 million second hand volumes currently on display, according to the article. In recent times Gould's went on-line with 40,000 titles. One wonders how they were selected and for what purpose and whether it paid off. Now Gould's book arcade will close in three months and the valuable site will be sold. Will the developers pulp a huge historic stock?

What value does or should the Gould's book stock have to those who research and keep Australian heritage, such as universities and museums, or Gleebooks customers? Like me some may be interested in personal or broader learning and pleasure, or in preservation and research of related global environments and subject matters over time. Driving IT direction often seems unrealistic in this context.

In Nairobi, for example, they appear barely able to keep key city traffic lights working on a daily basis, and many people have no public toilets although living in growing city slums as so many may move away from villages suffering under desertification. Their many children are not going to have personal Kindles, etc. that work any time soon, let alone well paid stable work in state or related institutions. How should books be treated in our own and other environments to preserve the cultural heritage and learn about others?

What will happen to all the goods I leave behind in the house – furniture, records, art, books; crockery, etc. when I am dead, like anybody else? This is not rubbish as much as a historical and cultural resource, if the true meaning of health is the recognition of the historical land and story, as Jung and many believe. **How are these valued and treated to preserve the cannon which is the ideal spine of community development?**

I guess Gleebooks are more sophisticated about such intellectual and related communication matters than many other booksellers because of their location and the particular environment of book launches which they inhabit through also promoting the books for sale. It would be great to understand their customers commercial or other interests and those of others around the place. Could David perhaps arrange a public discussion of such matters at the shop? Could this benefit us all in the short or longer run?

A local Chinese news agent referred me back to Museums at Sydney University when I discussed these regional and historical valuation, storage, promotion and distribution matters with him, (including the issue of potential commercial opportunities with the

historic national estate of Bob Gould's bookshop stock in Newtown). This Bob Gould stock is perhaps a vital opportunity to serve the national archive and employment intelligently by managing it well in some joint local venture, not taking it to the tip automatically or doing something else unknown to me or other booklovers across the world. Bob would value the opportunity greatly to develop this historical repository I am certain. I will discuss film later.

Everywhere the Oz film industry and key technology appears to be geared to raising money, via submission writing or crowd funding, or on skills development, rather than skills use and related offers. Everything appears to lead back to teaching. Are there secret social taboos? (Please explain to this Marxist grandma wanting to join the producers and needing back-up.)

Everything leads back to teaching and learning instead of to performing and being watched. I had enormously high hopes for Tropfest management under Sony. Today I doubt it a lot.

In retirement I find I perform roughly the same functions freely as I did when I was paid to perform them by government and university institutions. I write already and expect that people will want to tidy the narrative up with strong comments and change it. This expected critical dimension and its educational uses appears to have been lost in the rush to support commercial institutional operations as widely as possible. It would be good to see re-examination of business practices led by Gleebooks and actual or potential customers.

I was once a paid writer, on a yearly salary, but those days are over. Surely there must be filmmakers no longer on the tools, who still love their work and who ideally may be interested in a joint venture. **Where can I find some?** (I am a lady with a modest income and savings, getting a bit more like David Walliams on **Little Britain** every day, only tiny. I will not bore you with film industry matters here but only ask you to consider the attached and either hand it on to Bruce Beresford or give me access to his email address).

Ta very much for your broad and helpful service, long may it live, Cheers Carol
www.Carolodonnell, St James Court, 10/11 Rosebank St., Glebe, Sydney 2037