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## Reviews of Books

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*Basho's Journey: The Literary Prose of Matsuo Basho*. Translated and with an Introduction by David Landis Barnhill, NY: SUNY Press, 2005. 191p. ISBN 0-7914-6414-8. US\$19.95 (pbk).

One of Japan's best-loved and most widely read poets, Matsuo Basho (1644–1694) is generally regarded as the innovator and supreme master of the Japanese *haiku* form of poetry. English language translations of Basho's *haiku* abound, and Barnhill has himself contributed a substantial volume (comprising some 724 poems) entitled *Basho's Haiku: Selected Poems of Matsuo Basho*, (SUNY Press, 2004), which *Basho's Journey: The Literary Prose of Matsuo Basho* is intended to complement. One might wonder why yet another collection of Basho's works is required, but as Barnhill explains in his concise and thought-provoking Introduction, it is often forgotten that Basho was also a superb writer of prose, most of which found expression in his travel journals and *haibun* (prose-poems). *Basho's Journey* is the first English translation to include all five of Basho's travel journals; "Journal of Bleached Bones in a Field" (*Nozarashi Kiko*), "Kashima Journal" (*Kashima Kiko*), "Knapsack Notebook" (*Oi no Kobumi*), "Sarashina Journal" (*Sarashina Kiko*), "The Narrow Road to the Deep North" (*Oku no Hosomichi*); the Saga Diary (*Saga Nikki*) and a large portion of his *haibun*, including two different versions of "An Account of the Unreal Dwelling" and the "Transplantation of the Basho Tree". The latter underscores the scholarly nature of Barnhill's book, which meticulously arranges the works in chronological order and provides different versions of these two famous texts, illuminating Basho's development as a writer as a journey in itself.

This accords well with the overarching themes of this collection: journeying, movement, impermanence, what Barnhill calls "the itinerant quality of life itself" that Basho muses upon with a subtle poignancy that never lapses into outright melancholy. Basho describes himself with wry disparagement as a "bumbling wayfarer" (*Haibun*, p. 96) with a fondness for composing "mad poetry" ("Knapsack Notebook", p. 29), displaying an honesty that is compelling in its simple dignity:

I'm just a man of poor health weary of the world. What can I say? ... I've been fond of my eccentricities ever since I was quite young and I thought I'd make my living that way for a time. ... I toil in vain, my spirit worn out, my brow wrinkled ("Prose Poem on the Unreal Dwelling", p. 128).

Basho's poetry and prose are inextricable, each being "a record of the movements of the heart" (101), that grow out of his "wayfaring life" (Barnhill, 6). Basho spent most of his life as a lay monk, travelling on long, often arduous pilgrimages to the sacred and beautiful sites of ancient Japan, made famous through centuries of literature and poetry.

spend nights on a journey,  
then you'll know my poems—  
autumn wind (p. 102)

Though Basho is now known to the West as one of the greatest "nature poets" of Japan, Barnhill, who is Director of Environmental Studies as well as a professor of English at the University of Wisconsin, makes clear that Eastern and Western conceptions of "nature" and "culture" are quite different (pp. 7–9). Unlike the dualistic Western view, East Asian traditions tend to regard nature and human culture as part

of a seamless whole, where culture arises out of and infuses the natural world with a creative spirit that is life itself, so that “true art involves following nature’s own creativity” (p. 3). Thus Basho can write that “the aching sorrow of a mountain shelter or a hut in a moor become seeds for words and a way to become intimate with wind and clouds” (Knapsack Notebook, 30). Nature itself becomes poetry, acquiring a socio-cultural dimension through the textual, metaphorical density of Basho’s poetic style and multi-layered allusions to Chinese and Japanese classical literature and history. Basho journeys into both nature and culture by travelling imaginatively into the historical past and revitalizing it. In the “Knapsack Notebook” he describes Suma Bay near Osaka; the site of the slaughter of the Taira (Heike) clan by the Genji; made famous by the medieval *Tales of the Heike*: “The sorrow of a thousand years lingers on this beach. In the sound of the insensate, white waves is deep grief” (p. 43). Here nature and culture become inseparably fused in a shared cultural landscape.

*Basho’s Journey* reminds us on a number of levels that history is itself a journey through time, created by communities through a process of dialogue and interaction. One reason for the comparative neglect of Basho’s prose that Barnhill’s translation seeks to redress is the modernist bias towards *haiku* as the pre-eminent form of Japanese poetics. As Barnhill points out, *haiku* is, strictly speaking, a modern term describing a stand-alone Japanese verse form that developed only in the late nineteenth century, but was anachronistically applied to the pre-modern *hokku* of Basho by Westerners (p. 182). *Hokku* is the brief stanza offered by a master poet as an opening gambit to set the tone for a linked-verse poem (*renga*) composed by a group of people in a social gathering (pp. 182–3). Basho was famous in his own time for his innovative use of earthy, vernacular language that revitalized the *hokku* form, but as his travel diaries and *haibun* make clear, this kind of poetic composition was not only inseparably embedded in its surrounding prose, but was a fundamentally collaborative endeavour.

Japanese art and literature had a profound impact on the emerging modernist movement in the West in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, influencing Imagist poets such as Ezra Pound, and the later Beat poetry of Gary Snyder and Allen Ginsburg (p. 11). The dominance of literary modernism through to the 1950s and 60s not only influenced the modern creation of *haiku*, but retrospectively selected poetry in its own image, valorising the self-contained brevity and literary realism perceived in *hokku*, and isolating it from its original communal context. Barnhill’s collection emphasises the deep sense of community in the journals: not only does Basho travel with various companions, friends and disciples, but they compose poetry together in a joyously dynamic interaction:

Sleep is difficult and past midnight each of us gets up, so we bring out the sweets and wine cups from the afternoon and talk till dawn (Saga Diary, p. 81).

Haruo Shirane noted in *Modern Haiku* that Basho journeyed not only to meet new poets and collaborate on linked poems as a form of greeting and exchange, but also to converse with great authors of the past and engage with the “communal poetic body” through contemplation of famous historical places:

Of the places made famous in poetry since long ago, many are still handed down to us in verse. But mountains crumble, rivers change course, roadways are altered, stones are buried in the earth, trees grow old and are replaced by saplings; time goes by and the world shifts, and the traces of the past are unstable. Yet now before this monument, which certainly has stood a thousand years, I could see into the hearts of the ancients. Here is one virtue of the pilgrimage, one joy of being alive. I forgot the aches of the journey, and was left with only tears (Narrow Road, p. 59).

Passages such as this reveal Basho’s deeply felt Buddhist sensibility of the paradoxical impermanence and continuity of all things. Barnhill’s elegant and accessible translation of Basho’s literary prose is therefore doubly important, filling a gap in the existing literature and bringing attention to a body of literature with significant implications for contemporary ecocriticism, nature writing, and environmental philosophy, as well as appealing to more general interests in Asian art, culture and religion. His copious notes and concise introduction and glossary do not intrude upon one’s reading of Basho’s prose. This is rendered with an

immediacy and freshness that give this translation a contemporary feel, lacking the stiffness and pomposity of some earlier versions. Barnhill's translation retains a feeling of simplicity, yet also manages to convey Basho's linguistic subtlety and ambiguity, as well as his earthy sense of humour that delights in the small absurdities and indignities of life.

fleas, lice,  
     a horse peeing  
         by my pillow (Narrow Road, 63)

Following Barnhill's lead, the best way to understand Basho's poetry is to read it "recklessly", unmediated in all its profound unadornment. As Basho himself says:

So I've thrown together jottings of places unforgotten. Think of them as the delirium of a drunk or the rambling of one asleep, and listen recklessly. (Knapsack Notebook, p. 30)

Kim Selling

Mary L. Connerley & Paul B. Pedersen, *Leadership in a Diverse and Multicultural Environment*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2005. 215p. ISBN 0-7619-8860-2. US\$35.95 (pbk).

The blurb on the back cover of this book recommends it as "an ideal supplemental text for undergraduate—or graduate—level international management, leadership, or diversity-related courses taught in the business curriculum", as well as for "leadership courses taught in education and communication departments". Well, it is not quite "ideal" for many reasons, if ever any book can be ideal as a text (as experienced classroom practitioners will well attest). It can, however, be useful as a *basis* on which to build and design a stand-alone course or module, for example, in a graduate business school class.

The authors open, predictably, by arguing their case for the centrality of multi-cultural or diversity training in corporate settings, not only in international business organizations, but also in domestic settings in the United States, recognizing that such settings are inherently and increasingly diverse culturally. This is emphasized subsequently as they present their broad sociological definition of culture, to include differences beyond those normally associated with ethnicity, geography and religion, such as gender, social class, and professions and occupations. The notion of "multi-culturalism" as an approach to diversity management vis-à-vis other approaches like assimilation and accommodation is also clarified, and argued for as superior. The book then summarizes various frameworks for categorizing, defining and understanding various elements of culture, without actually pressing for any particular model, but drawing attention to their importance to leadership actions in the workplace. The intention is evidently merely consciousness-raising, rather than doctrinaire.

The authors then move on to the business of how multi-cultural competencies can be developed, introducing a multi-dimensional model that takes into account race- and culture-specific attributes, components of the competence, and various levels of foci (namely, individual, professional, organizational and societal). Chiefly, the authors advocate an approach to development that moves through awareness raising, knowledge acquisition, and skill development with regard to each of the dimensions, and this forms the basis of two chapters on developing multi-cultural and diversity training programs.

The last part of the book returns to the immediate business of corporate leadership, discussing the practical matter of conflict management from the perspective of cultural considerations, before closing with a call to "re-define leadership through multi-culturalism", thereby re-emphasizing the centrality that the authors see for multi-cultural management in leadership.

In terms of presentation, each chapter of the book begins in the fashion of a teaching manual, with

bulleted point statements of the major and secondary objectives of the chapter. Each chapter also ends with discussion questions, a critical incident to be explored, and a further classroom exercise, including a specific procedure for carrying it out and instructions for de-briefing. Thus, the book was clearly conceptualized as a teaching text, making it appear handy for time-pressed instructors with a need for ready-made tasks and activities.

The book draws on diverse insights from sociology and anthropology, psychology, educational studies, and management theory, with an evidently pragmatic rather than theoretical emphasis. In so doing, it gives many potted versions of many well-known theories, which those in each of these fields will be familiar with. For example, there are quick introductions to the notions of assimilation, accommodation and the ‘melting pot’ metaphor from sociological theory, and to Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences, Kolb’s learning styles theory and Gagne’s theory of instruction, which those in education may well be very familiar with. None of these, however, are sufficiently developed for any adequate understanding to be possible. Thus, the book in this regard, is probably of greatest value to those who already have knowledge and understanding of these theories, as a quick source of reference, and in showing how these theories can be incorporated in an applied way to a training program. The instructor using this book would need to supplement the material with his or her own expert input. Even the arguments for the case of multi-cultural training in the first two chapters are often merely asserted, rather than fully developed in any convincing way. Nevertheless, it still provides a sufficiently good introduction to a wealth of theories applicable to management settings.

One further limitation of the book is that it was written with a specifically American readership in mind, so that many of the examples and some of the explanations need much re-contextualization if it is to be used in other settings. The language of the authors is also somewhat uneven, at times refreshing clear (especially in the practical sections), but at times with stretches of obtuse academic prose—hence, my reservations in recommending it as text for students, except in the absence of good alternatives on the subject.

In summary, I would recommend this book to would-be instructors in the know, who do have sufficient background knowledge of the various theories referred to, if they wish or have a need to propose or construct a training course on a subject related to culture and leadership and/or communication. They would be able to draw many insights and ideas from the authors, who have obviously based it on courses and training programs they have conducted. It may also be a valuable course book for training *trainers* in multi-cultural management, but they would need to be encouraged to do much supplementary reading to be more effective. I would suppose it might be possible to use it a supplemental text for undergraduate or graduate-level business or management courses, but while useful, I would hardly say it is “ideal”.

Benedict Lin

Harry G. Frankfurt, *On Bullshit*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005. 67p. ISBN: 0-691-12294-6. \$9.95/£.6.50 (hdb).

Philosophers have long viewed themselves as truth-tellers. They appear at weddings, or wherever five or six are gathered, with outstretched finger and minatory message: “boy, pull yourself together.” In the west, Socrates was such a wedding guest. In the east, Confucius might qualify: an “axial” thinker, in Robert Bellah’s sense, at sixes-and-sevens with his non-axial world. In consequence, security companies are always hiring. Those committed to the rhetoric of “moving on,” or alternatively to Disney-like fantasy celebrations, have little patience for those who nag at scruple. Terence, this is stupid stuff; come, pipe a tune to dance to, lad.

Harry Frankfurt is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at Princeton. He has written a number of well-

respected and therefore generally unread books on love, free will, and human values. In 1986, he also published an essay on the nature and consequences of bullshit. Two years later, the essay appeared in his *Importance of What We Care About*. In 2005, Princeton University Press reissued the essay as a book. Since its initial release, it has been reprinted more than ten times. Frankfurt has appeared on television, given numerous interviews, and seen his work aspire to a minor classic. *On Bullshit* has jumpstarted a genre (witness Laura Penny's *The Truth About Bullshit*), and even been set to music, I am told, by a particularly inflamed reader in Wales.

Frankfurt begins his work in the way philosophy works have always begun: my subject is everywhere, and everywhere important, yet no one has ventured to give it the attention it deserves. As with the postman in Chesterton's *Father Brown* series, that which is ubiquitous tends to be invisible. In Frankfurt's rendition, "[o]ne of the most salient features of our culture is that there is so much bullshit. Everyone knows this. Each of us contributes his share. But we tend to take the situation for granted ... the phenomenon has not aroused much deliberate concern, nor attracted much sustained inquiry."

This deficit is to be remedied, albeit in a disciplined way. Frankfurt's aim, as he explains it, is not to say everything possible about his topic, but "simply to give a rough account of what bullshit is and how it differs from what it is not—or (putting it somewhat differently) to articulate, more or less sketchily, the structure of its concept." Obviously, it wouldn't do to bullshit about bullshit. To that end, his prose is compact, even schematic: not simply emitted, to use one of his own comparisons, but carefully *wrought*. Frankfurt's inquiry covers 66 and 1/3 pages, at about 100 words per page in duodecimo, cloth. From Cicero, Montaigne, or Bacon, we have "On Friendship," "On Love," or "On Studies." Harry G. Frankfurt gives us "On Bullshit."

But what exactly is this BS that Frankfurt is on to or on top of? Its distinguishing quality, he wishes to claim, is a characteristic unconcern for truth. The liar is tied to truth in the way Milton's Satan is tied to God. One depends symbiotically upon the other. The bullshitter or bullshitress, by contrast, is a free radical. He or she does not deny the truth, but merely ignores it. "It is impossible for someone to lie," Frankfurt argues, "unless he thinks he knows the truth. Producing bullshit requires no such conviction ... [i]t is just this lack of a connection to a concern with truth—this indifference to how things really are—that I regard as of the essence of bullshit." What emerges *from* bullshit is therefore not necessarily falsehood. It is rather that the bullshit artist never sticks around long enough for the report.

After the *quidditas*, Frankfurt moves on, in good Scholastic fashion, to the *qualitas*. How does BS stack up to rival terms: "humbug," for example, or "balderdash," "claptrap," "bunkum," "bull," "bluff" or the more generic "crap"? Much of his essay is given over to this consideration, some of it drawn (as he acknowledges) from the entry on "bullshit" in the supplementary volume of the OED. "Humbug" is up first. Frankfurt considers a definition given by Max Black, assesses its features term by term, and ultimately denies a close consanguinity, if for reasons that are never made clear. "Bull", "bull session", and "shooting the bull" bat next. The essence of the bull session, according to Frankfurt, is experimental, allowing participants "to convey what is on their minds without too much anxiety that they will be held to it." As with the bullshitter, the bull merchant is fundamentally unconcerned with the truth. Unlike the former, however, the latter does not pretend to the contrary. Bull, it appears, is an honest, sanitized form of bullshit. It also appears to generate public benefits. One might well bowl alone. No one bullshits alone.

Lastly, Frankfurt considers "bluff." Both the bullshitter and the bull merchant, it might be thought, are practiced bluffers, the nature of bluffing being fakery rather than falsity. The problem in each case is not fact as much as method: "[w]hat is wrong with the counterfeit is not what it is like, but how it was made." At the same time, bluffing may imply an earnestness that is absent in shooting the bull. The bluffer wants desperately to win, and therefore floats smokescreens to this end; the bull merchant, on the other hand, wants to experiment and/or amuse. For the latter, the pigment is meant to wash off at closing time.

Good clean fun or otherwise, is bullshit on the rise? Is there more of it today, in other words, than before? Frankfurt is non-committal. Grand theorizing about macro-historical trends is a bit risky—a real bullshitter's carnival, in fact. Empirically, however, the media are omnipresent now as they were not a

century ago, their invasive sophistication encouraging more and more people “to speak extensively about matters of which they are to some extent ignorant.” To account for the ubiquity of BS, Frankfurt also points to the popularity of anti-realist positions that deny the possibility of reliable statements of fact. More speculatively, he indicts the cult of sincerity that is said to take its cue from the unsettling consequences of post-modern doubt. In an argument that echoes Adorno’s *Jargon of Authenticity*, Frankfurt dismisses as “preposterous” the notion of providing honest representations of oneself in place of true representations of the world. “Our natures are, indeed, elusively insubstantial—notoriously less stable and less inherent than the nature of other things. And insofar as this is the case, sincerity itself is bullshit.”

So ends the work. Very clever. The painting of the wine glass turns out to be a wine glass, after all. In addition to the Cretan liar, therefore, we have the Cretan bullshitter, one who is not and does what he necessarily is and does not. The studied elusiveness continues in the “About the Author” note that follows the text: “Harry G. Frankfurt, renowned moral philosopher....” Here, surely, is a classic instance of shooting the bull: a bit of harmless bluff or stuff not so much false (*On Bullshit* may be the source of this renown, in fact) as indifferent to the truth. By playing Harry with notoriety, Frankfurt may wish us to key in on the difference between benign and malignant forms of bull. In this case, Harry is to be forgiven because we have been amused and because we sense that he is not taken in by his own claim nor intends others to be.

On the whole, however, the mood of *On Bullshit* is exploratory rather than ludic. There are no bubblegum-popping exclamations, no invocations of the Vedas, no intellectual card tricks to flummox the uninitiated. We sense that Frankfurt stands behind his lynchpin distinction between lying and bullshit, and that his assessment of the latter as “a greater enemy of the truth” is meant to be taken at face value. The gimmickry of pol-speak, automated telephone systems, stock trading schemes, public service announcements, video evangelism, and academic research is clearly not the way it should be. A society on the make is not the good society.

Petty rhetoric (or the rhetoric of the petty) seems objectionable in part because it deflates the lie of defiance into the pabulum of docility. If bullshit is a greater enemy of truth than lies are, it is because bullshitters have divorced intention from result. This one shouldn’t do. One should say what one means (or doesn’t mean) and face the consequences. The great liars and truth-tellers of record have done precisely this, while the peddlers of bullshit fish and cut bait. But how in practice is one to distinguish the first from the second? And even more vexingly, what criteria beyond context and general intuition allow us to differentiate the more benign forms of bull peddling from the more malignant ones of bullshitting? Frankfurt invites suggestions, but provides no succinct answers.

His sense that he should limit his inquiry to English-language sources also narrows the view. The bullshit meter, no doubt, registers high wherever the foreign-word-and-phrase game is played. “Aletheia,” someone intones; “il n’y a pas de hors-texte,” says another. “Mmm,” the audience murmurs, “that’s just what I think myself.” Yet Heidegger’s discussion of *Gerede* in *Sein und Zeit* is a relevant precursor for Frankfurt’s own reflections, as is Brecht’s use of “*plumpes Denken*,” which attempts in some wise to pitch bullshit against itself. Flaubert’s *Dictionnaire des idées reçues* is a good repository of what its author considered French bullshit of the time. *Jargon der Eigentlichkeit*, noted above, belongs to an extended critique of laxative culture that became one of the hallmarks of the Frankfurt School. In Japan, one speaks of *tatema*, the idle chatter designed to maintain social harmony by disguising true intention, or *honne*. Admittedly, such a conspectus is not essential for Frankfurt’s modest introduction to the topic. It does suggest, however, that bullshit’s immediate context, if not the term itself, has been amply weighed and measured over the years.

There is also a more peripheral discourse on excrement as theme or *topos*. Frankfurt mentions Freud in this regard, and one might well view the bull session as a ritual recasting of the rejected gift of excrement the young child first offers its parents. Later in life, that child will peddle similar products to a welcoming public: free enterprise as the triumph of sublimation. Yet excrement also has clear associations to death, as Frankfurt notes in a valuable aside, and as Norman O. Brown pursued more ambitiously in *Life Against*

*Death*. One might also think of the clinically mad Nietzsche consuming his own in a perverse staging of the eternal return. Or perhaps of William Carlos Williams' undigested America in "To Elsie": "as if the earth under our feet/were/an excrement of some sky/and we degraded prisoners /destined/to hunger until we eat filth." This is the somber tradition.

There is another tradition. This is the world of Petronius, Rabelais, and Swift, whose Celias not only s\_\_\_\_ but find their s\_\_\_\_\_ good. It is also the world of Leopold Bloom's metaphysics of the cuckstool, sharpened on the prose of *Matcham's Masterstroke*: 32 ft., per sec., per sec. (colon intended). Along the way, it takes in the famous *Dukatenscheisser* already known to 17<sup>th</sup> century Dutch art and standing watch over the town square of Goslar in Lower Saxony. Duchamp's *Urinal* is a micturating cousin. One might also think of another relative of *Matcham's*: the English repository tracts donated to the rural poor to wean them from ballad romances, but printed on soft paper so as not to inflame tender backsides. More recently, Arthur Kroker has provided a post-modern update of what he terms "excremental culture." His analysis approaches Frankfurt's in places, though with a celebratory buoyancy the latter eschews. A related post-modern reflection on bullshit can be found in Penn and Teller's TV show, *Bullshit!*, which seeks to expose bluffs and bluffers, then explain why they are so compelling. As a kind of bluff in its own right, the show participates in what Kroker would call "hyper-aesthetics."

More than enough reading, we might conclude, for the next few sittings. Were Frankfurt to return to his topic again, he might usefully provide a critique of these lighter, more celebratory approaches, and an explanation for the general lack of legal and political sanctions against a phenomenon that acts as both irritant and menace. Is bullshit simply too difficult to police, to clean up? Or is it the case that the uncertainty costs generated by bullshit and bullshitting are less than the information costs associated with telling the truth or lying? Perhaps it could even be argued that bullshitting creates positive externalities (greater self-confidence and sociability, for example) that are not adequately reflected in price mechanisms for information exchange. In that case, conventional economic wisdom would suggest that the socially optimal level of bullshit will not be met unless government steps in to, well, close the gap. Food for thought. And food enticing enough, one hopes, to encourage others similarly inspired to contribute their share.

J. E. Elliott

Martin Harrison, *Who Wants to Create Australia?: Essays on poetry and ideas in contemporary Australia*. Sydney: Halstead Press, 2004. 112p. ISBN 1-920831-20-7. A\$22.00 (hdb).

In many ways, Harrison's short essay on contemporary Australian poetry could be seen to form a response to Hölderlin's question from the elegy "Bread and Wine" which asks, "What are poets for in a destitute time?" Certainly, with the race riots in Sydney before Christmas and the commitment of more troops to Iraq this month, the present moment in Australia might be seen as destitute.

Harrison's choice of title is intriguing as it places national identity front and centre of what is really a book on contemporary Australian poetry and poetics, recent developments in aesthetics stemming from new media technology, the experience and expression of place, and the writerly life. Harrison's examination of poetry and Australia offers a glimpse of several key contemporary Australian poets contextualized by more general concerns with poetics rather than a general reading guide or primer to Australian poetry. Readers of earlier examinations of contemporary Australian poetry, such as Andrew Taylor's *Reading Australian Poetry*, Noel Rowe's *Modern Australia Poets* and Paul Kane's *Australian Poetry: Romanticism and Negativity*, will find in Harrison's essays a continuation of the same close, insightful and respectful critical engagement with contemporary Australian poetry, but one that at the same time pursues issues beyond poetry itself. Indeed, while poetry is the space Harrison seeks to explore if not settle within, he

often begins with broader social concerns in Australia—the rise of economic rationalism, technological innovations (especially to do with mass media), changes in education, the drought, nationalism and so on—before returning to poetry as an appropriate site for the interrogation of such concerns. Harrison draws his reading of particular poems and poets into various but related concerns: the evolution of new and mass media in the 1990s and the consequently accelerated changes to aesthetics along with the evolution of digital aesthetics; a phenomenology of perception specific to Australian place and its articulation; shared cultural heritage between Australia, the United Kingdom and America, and the attendant postcolonial concerns; contemporary shifts in notions of land, “country” and nation, of what “Australian” and dwelling in Australia constitutes (or perhaps *means*); and perhaps most centrally an ongoing reconsideration of modernity in an Australian context. As Harrison has it, poetry may be seen as a “point of convergence” where Australian modernity, in its various permutations, is revealed.

Harrison’s view of poetry is that its writing and its reading are inextricably linked to the contemporary moment, and that through a renewed engagement with Australian poetry the reader may well ascertain a more profound knowledge of Australian place and experience. He notes in his introduction that poetry has been displaced from its central position in modern literature and while it has been transformed in recent times by modernist and postmodernist experimentation and innovation, in the contemporary moment there is the danger that the discussion of poetry “becomes a narrow kind of talk, exclusive of poetry readers’ other interests and experiences.” Central to Harrison’s agenda is that poetry be seen as vital a way to engage with the contemporary, as important a cultural product in the present, as other media new and old (from the novel and the television, to the world-wide web and the video clip). Harrison views literary criticism and cliques as complicit in this erosion of poetry’s central position, where “Literary ‘in-house’ matters, the deadly process of respectabilisation-by-theory, the reduction of poetry to cliché useful for nation-building, the dogmas of poetic controversy: all in their different ways turn poetry into a vehicle whose wheels grind downwards in the sand.” Harrison recognizes that “readers give up reading poetry when they feel that poems can no longer address the significant big and significant small questions of their lives ... if it stops looking like a lively, challenging, emotionally fresh and intelligent part of the repertoire of activities which construct an engagement with contemporary experience and meaning.”

To his credit, Harrison avoids a reading of recent and contemporary Australian poetry couched in terms of literary schools or politics. Unlike many commentators on modern Australian poetry, Harrison gives little time to a reading of poetry vested in the antics and politics of the poets themselves. While the “blood-sport” side of Australian poetry with its anthology wars, its underground presses, pseudo-criminality, occasional excess, ego, viciousness, malice, humour and community makes for entertaining reading, it does little real service to the poetry or its reading. As such, Harrison tends more to concentrate on the poetry and its broader social, aesthetic, political or linguistic interconnections, and gives close readings of separate poems by a range of poets disparate in poetic, politics and age: A. D. Hope, Judith Wright, David Campbell, Peter Porter, John Tranter, Les Murray, Robert Gray, Robert Adamson, Kevin Hart, Jennifer Rankin, Antigone Kefala, Philip Hodgins and MTC Cronin. Central to Harrison’s regard for poetry is the critique of how the poet’s experience of space, phenomena and relation are communicated, be it Les Murray’s experience of body, self, land and spirituality in “At Min-Min Camp”, John Tranter’s exploration of textuality in “Blackout” or Margie Cronin’s interlocution with Neruda in “Talking to Neruda’s Questions”. Harrison offers two longer readings of work by Robert Gray and Kevin Hart, the latter of which is striking for its generous and careful threading of a way through Hart’s deceptively “simple” poetry.

Harrison’s short and lucid collection of essays incorporates ideas from contemporary philosophy and “theory” with clarity, insight and, most of all, purpose. To his credit, Harrison manages to approach complexity with clarity, avoiding excessive *pomo* jargon while making good use of ideas drawn from often-maligned “theory”. While Harrison openly refers and responds to the likes of Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Gaston Bachelard, he does so without pretension or obfuscation. Similarly the influence of Martin Heidegger, Jean-Luc Nancy and Paul Virilio are evident, providing a backdrop to his meditations, which offer an understanding of language as a place of dwelling, an understanding of convergence that resonates

as community, and an awareness of the acceleration of the temporal through new media and its possible effects on perception and communication. Unlike much other contemporary theory and criticism, Harrison's use of these philosophers' and critics' work is not limited to invocation and imitation—it does not simply echo or bang the postmodern drum—but is purposeful, appropriate and finally deepens the engagement with the poetry immediately to hand as well as broader issues of “Australian” modernity and place. While drawing from predominately Continental ideas of literary practice (though the likes of Michael Heim and Jonathon Bate also feature), Harrison is not engaging in an act of cultural cringe. His critical engagement with Australian poetry, and Australian aesthetics and poetics more generally, complements the sort of astute home-grown Australian criticism and theory begun in the 1980s and 1990s by the likes of Paul Carter, exploring—mapping out while forming a part of—contemporary Australian thought and contributing to an international dialogue. Equally, Harrison continues the sort of clear thinking and sophisticated interweaving of poetry and contemporary philosophical thought that can be found in recent Australian, or Australian-related, literary criticism by the likes of Paul Kane, Kevin Hart and Kate Rigby.

At a time when, for even highly-literate readers, poetry remains the bit of Keats they read at high school, or a vague notion that it is at best embarrassingly sentimental or at worst completely incomprehensible, so much garbal, black gush or advertising copy, Harrison's meditations offer something of a salve. More often than not it is the case that reader's reading habits, assumptions, or more simply lack of reading, register poetry as irrelevant and anachronistic, without any true insight into poetry of the present time. Harrison's short, magisterial collection of essays goes some way to redressing this, showing readers that contemporary poetry is just that, contemporaneous.

Michael Brennan

Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go*. London: Faber & Faber, 2005. 272p. ISBN 0-571-22411-3. £16.99 (hdb).

After a five-year interval, Ishiguro has produced another important novel that reclaims his place at the head of English contemporary literature. The novel is set in England in the late 1990s, and belongs to a group of works of the kind that envisage a parallel history (Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America* being a recent example), in this case where human cloning is a reality.

Both *The Unconsoled* (1995) and *When We Were Orphans* (2000) are novels shrouded in mystery and where there is no plot in the conventional sense. Peter Kemp, in the Sunday Times, writes that *Never Let Me Go* is the third in “what could be called Kazuo Ishiguro's Bewilderment Trilogy” and after reading the confusing opening pages I felt that he might be right. *Never Let Me Go* opens with the narrator and key protagonist, Kathy, discussing “her donors” and her role as a carer, pondering that the time is upon her when she should give up her profession. As the novel unfolds it becomes clear that she is some sort of nurse but that things are not as straightforward as the reader might have thought. However, this book is enigmatic but simple in a way more reminiscent of Ishiguro's first three novels, *A Pale View of the Hills* (1982), *An Artist of the Floating World* (1986) and *The Remains of the Day* (1989), than the “Bewilderment” novels. In *Never Let Me Go*, as with his earlier work, the past is seen as the key to understanding the present and distorted memories resurface to shed new light and drive the narrative. It would be better placed as the fourth work in a dark “*A la recherche du temps perdu*” quartet.

*Never Let Me Go* is written in the understated and simple flowing prose that make Ishiguro's books so easy to read. There is something one might describe as innocent in Ishiguro's style that creates an atmosphere of coziness, and this, coupled with the backdrop, are designed to lure the reader into a sense of security, which Ishiguro subsequently undermines, creating doubts and questions in the reader that he then avoids confronting. For example, Kathy thinks back to her days at Hailsham, which we assume at first to be some sort of forward-thinking public school but it eventually becomes clear that this is no ordinary school.

Perhaps this is an orphanage as there is no mention of the children's parents, but then why the curious emphasis on the students' need to show creativity? And why are their efforts then mysteriously selected and removed by a Frenchwoman who looks at the children with disgust?

With the passing of time Kathy starts questioning her situation and looks to the past for answers. Like with Stevens in *The Remains of the Day*, her questions allow us to discover more about the characters and their world as they embark on a journey of self-discovery that darkens the rose-tinted spectacles of nostalgia as it gradually becomes apparent that we are to be witness to something sinister. In a sense, Hailsham is an orphanage as it is one of the centers where parent-less clones are "reared" until adulthood, whereupon they are expected to become donors, giving their vital organs, sometimes as many as four times, before "completing" (a euphemistic term for dying a painful death).

If one argues that this is bewilderment then it is certainly a lucid form. The fact that Kathy has recently become the carer of Tommy and Ruth, her two best friends at Hailsham, instigates her nascent desire for truth. She seems perfectly equipped to start looking into her past as at no point does she shy away from the grim reality. However, Kathy herself is a product of the system and the questions that she asks and the issues that are important to her and the other clones leave wider ethical, moral and practical questions begging to be asked. While Tommy and Ruth try to see if it is possible to put off becoming donors for a year or two more so they might spend more time together, at no point do they ever question the way in which they are asked to "complete" any more than the average human might ponder the inevitability of death. The inability of the clones to confront many existential questions invite the reader to do so in the clones' place.

In many ways the resigned inevitability in which Ishiguro's key protagonists accept their fate (Stevens in *The Remains of the Day*, Masuji Ono in *An Artist of the Floating World*) goads us into imagining what a happy ending would be but after luring the reader to believe in a positive resolution, Ishiguro then destroys all illusions. While in these earlier novels there is a poignant sadness as the heroes must accept some responsibility for the choices they have made, Kathy and the other clones are totally helpless, and *Never Let Me Go* is a harrowing amplification of this recurrent theme of wasted lives.

The novel has been criticized for the Hollywood-style "showdown" scene at the end of the book where Kathy confronts the head guardian at Hailsham and the mysteries of the novel are explained. However, this scene should be seen as a Kafkaesque dark, sad parody: this is not Agatha Christie and the questions that satisfy the clones and allow them to make sense of their lives and of their past also leave them forlorn with no hope for any sort of future.

While issues surrounding genetic engineering are not studied in any detail, cloning is not essentially what this book is about. Like all Ishiguro's works, *Never Let Me Go* invites us to ask questions of ourselves and what it means to be human, to question our relationships with those around us and the world at large and, as such, deserves to be read.

Joseph Haldane

Nigel Rodgers & Mel Thompson, *Philosophers Behaving Badly*. London and Chester Springs: Peter Owen Publishers, 2005. 240p. ISBN 0-7206-1219-5. £13.95 (hdb).

Perhaps one needs to give a reason for succumbing to the temptation to read a book with this title. Mine was that it appeared in the new acquisitions section of our library, and noting that the badly-behaved included several philosophers with whose work and biographical details I was quite intimate, I borrowed it. The philosophers mainly covered in chapters are Rousseau, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Russell, Wittgenstein, Heidegger, Sartre and Foucault. Other philosophers are mentioned in passing for their bad behaviour. Rodgers wrote the essays on the first five named and Thompson the last three. The formula

followed by the writers is mainly biographical with minimal and sometimes glib reference to the main tenets or intellectual contributions of the subject himself. In a cautionary note published elsewhere the authors claim:

*We have used our best endeavours to be scrupulously and equally unfair to all the philosophers alike, and highly selective in the material that we have sought to examine...*

and,

*We have resisted the temptation to distinguish carefully between bad behaviour, foolishness and plain social ineptitude. Such distinctions are relevant only to the moralistic evaluation of behaviour; whereas our intention is merely to introduce the follies of the wise, thereby preserving their memory from the embarrassment of sanctification.*

The writers' endeavours and intentions are well satisfied by the resulting work, but it is deeply unsatisfying for anyone without a voyeuristic or anti-intellectual interest. It perhaps reveals more about the writers' own level of interest. No one knowledgeable enough about the intellectual contributions of the philosophers in question learns anything more from this book. In the case of all the wise men here one would have to say that enough of their private lives is generally well enough known too. Though claiming to eschew moral evaluation, the subtext clearly contains charges of hypocrisy disguised by a robust sniggering voyeurism behind one hand and by a degree of discomfort about the sexual activities of their anti-heroes behind the other.

The only serious question it raises is whether it is important to know anything about the private lives of these writers in order to understand their writings. In my view it is not, but one feels the authors would not agree. It could be seen as part of the tendency to "dumbing down" especially since another reviewer absurdly notes that it will likely encourage students' interest in philosophy.

A particularly nasty piece is the essay on Wittgenstein. He comes across as a man of dubious moral seriousness while Svengali-like ruining the lives of several of his student lovers by turning them away from philosophy towards manual occupations. I believe Wittgenstein really saw little future in the activity, and certainly the contempt in which he held the academic life in Cambridge and the high table in particular, would indicate a different motive for his advice. Readers of Ray Monk's or Brian McGuinness's biographies of Wittgenstein might cringe at Rodgers' gross portrayal of the man whose passions, torments and genius are so sensitively drawn out in their works. As good as second-hand biographies are, one must rely more on first hand works (from those who knew the man). In this case Norman Malcolm's memoir and the biographical sketches of von Wright and Broad are helpful.

Wittgenstein's extraordinary generosity is also put down to baser motives. That he gave away his inheritance in 1920 (a fortune in those days) is ascribed to a wish "to deny himself all possibility of succumbing to temptations", these alluded to as "the metropolitan fleshpots". Poor Ludwig does not even get much credit for his architectural contribution to the house that he and "the real architect" Engelmann designed for his sister, which Rodgers claims "strikes even many Bauhaus admirers as chillingly austere" and "rather like the *Tractatus*". G. H. von Wright by contrast, said that it possessed the same "static beauty" as the *Tractatus*. That Wittgenstein spent 2 years working on it is unacknowledged. (The house stands in Vienna today, in Kundmanngasse 19 and is accessible to anyone evincing an interest in Wittgenstein or architecture.) It is no less interesting (historically and aesthetically) than the Hundertwasser apartment house a few blocks away. Some fine photos of its interior can be found on the web site: [www.suzfoto.com/arc/wittgensteinE](http://www.suzfoto.com/arc/wittgensteinE). That Wittgenstein is listed as the first architect and that a book *The Architecture of Ludwig Wittgenstein* is written about it might indicate his "real" contribution to Stoneborough House, as it is called. Rodgers' historical insensitivity to intellectual temper of the post empire period might have been softened had he read Toulmin & Janik's *Wittgenstein's Vienna*. We also are persuaded towards the belief that the Wittgenstein family, besides being "colossally arrogant", was, to use a modern term, dysfunctional. This is sadly off the mark. A reading of McGuinness will clarify this point. Only three other of the eight

children are mentioned, and that only because they committed suicide. At the end of this piece there is a gratuitous comparison made with Hitler, whom we are also told, attended the same school. You may feel like washing your hands after reading this chapter.

Some of the scandal in the book is un-attributed, some of it is hedged by “reputedly” and “apparently” and some of it implied. Rodgers mentions that Russell’s daughter-in-law claims he seduced her, but then notes that the evidence for this is ambiguous. Russell (the “arid philosopher”) is treated worse than Wittgenstein even. Aside from an indulgent coverage of his sex life (and “rampant libido”), the author points out the grave contradictions between his popular writing on education and parenting, and his practice of the same. As with Wittgenstein, there is an attempt to question the sincerity of Russell’s convictions. Readers might rather read Russell’s autobiography, books, and letters, and the biographical portrait by his daughter Kate, as well as the autobiography of Dora Black (his second wife). A different view of his courage and convictions will emerge. The Russell essay, as well as diminishing the subject’s philosophical contribution, groans under Rodger’s heavy handed pop psychoanalysis of the affects of a lonely and orphaned childhood and his smug moralistic judgments.

The authors’ interest in their subjects’ sexual activities is either prurient or disingenuous. Are they writing for the sensationalist tabloid press’s masses? Suspicions of this creep into passages such as “Dora ... fell madly in love with Griffin Barry, a bisexual Communist-sympathizing adventurer”, thus raising two of the shibboleths of the yellow press (the remaining one being drug addiction—this to come later in the case of Foucault, he a homosexual to top it off). It is not sufficient to cite Julian Bell’s clever poem about Wittgenstein; we must be reminded that he (Bell) was the lover of the “famous art historian (and later notorious traitor) Anthony Blunt”. One is surprised that others of Bloomsbury group get such little attention, given the unrestrained pleasure the author derives from exposing the privileged libertinism of the upper classes. Keynes’ “homoerotic” interests are of course referred to. We even learn that he was “no intellectual slouch”.

Foucault gets better treatment than most others. Thompson is more comfortable writing about philosophy than is his co-author and his intellectual grasp of Foucault (and Heidegger) is good. He evinces more of a personal anguish in describing what we are given to consider as the bad behaviour of Foucault. We learn that he spied on young men with binoculars from his eighth story flat in Paris, but soon after discovered California in 1970 and the sexual freedom of the bathhouses where the “unceasing sexual orgies ... were an intoxicating liberation”. He also took LSD and opium, caught AIDS and “in his last years of unprotected abandon was able to experience something that his most morbid thoughts had long contemplated ... the exquisite transformation of pain into erotic pleasure”. Foucault defied cultural norms and Thompson is unsure of his motives. It does not take much reading of Foucault to realize that his actions are consistent with his questioning of the arbitrariness of the social constructs and institutions that surround us. Just as his writings do, his actions make the same point. So can he be justly accused of bad behaviour?

Rousseau’s private life, like Russell’s, seems to contradict his political philosophy. His “bad behaviour”, perhaps less known, consisted in misogyny, ill-treatment of his wife, abandonment of his children, and manipulating and using his admirers”. Schopenhauer’s philosophy gets little attention. What counts against him is his misanthropy, misogyny, gloominess and Stylitic life style, but does this count as bad behaviour? He is guilty of associating with Wagner, who predictably, gets flayed in the book. While Schopenhauer invited troops to his room in Frankfurt to shoot down at the insurgents in the 1849 revolution, the writer fails to mention that had he (Schopenhauer) lived in Dresden, Wagner might have been shot, since he was participating on the other side. His influence on Wittgenstein is scarcely mentioned. It might well have been construed to count against him just as his influence on Nietzsche does. Heidegger gets the most scorn for his Nazism and hypocritical anti-Semitism. His excoriation is more deserved perhaps, yet his influence on the last century’s thought is profound.

The book, in an obligatory nod to political correctness, manages to devote one page to some badly behaved woman philosophers, no small task given the low status of women as a result of historical and cultural factors and the “endemic sexism of the Judeo-Christian tradition”. Poor Iris Murdoch gets

mentioned for “her peripatetic love life”. The “sexually voracious, egocentric and exploitative Simone de Beauvoir” gets a gong for her contributions to “Sartre’s literary voyeurism”. We are assured that if there were more women philosophers they would contribute their share to the “sum of human folly”. The sisters may not agree, I fear. They certainly would not agree with the claim that Mary Wollstonecraft behaved badly. If you wish to read the book you may find it on the rack before a supermarket checkout.

Michael Herriman

Jeffrey S. Young & William L. Simon, *iCon: Steve Jobs The Greatest Second Act in the History of Business*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2005. 368p. ISBN 0-471-72083-6. Yen 2641 (hdb).

Apple’s iPods have quickly established themselves as simply the coolest gadgets around, a sublime mix of white elegance and high-tech effortlessness that have cross-generational appeal—perfect for anyone who ever daydreamed of storing their entire music collection on a device the size of a pack of chewing gum. Moving house will at least be a little easier in future. The distinctive white wires rising in a graceful loop from beneath a business suit or sports vest, concealing a small device strapped to an arm or waist, is one of the recurring images one finds at almost any street corner of any city, anywhere in the world today, from New York to Nisshin.

Supported by the iTunes software, the iPod has transformed the music business in a response to the challenge posed by Napster, providing a solution that is at once both acceptable to consumers in search of one track rather than a whole CD, as well as producers intent on curbing the ripping of copyrighted work. Sales of the iPod are predicted to reach thirty-five million by the end of 2005, and the range of portable players now dominate over 80% of the market for MP3 players. Hot on the heels of blogging, podcasting is the new buzzword on the lips of Internet innovators and educational technologists. And while iPods have been introduced into educational institutions largely one suspects at the behest of improving recruitment by dangling the latest cool goods before the noses of the increasingly expectant student-customers, interesting pedagogical innovations are not far behind, especially in the area of language learning. It seems that Steve Jobs has once again done for popular music what he first did for personal computers with the introduction of the Apple II and Macintosh, and for the animation film industry with Pixar.

Having catalogued Jobs’ association with these iconic products of globalization, it’s a surprise to find that according to reports Apple has removed all Wiley books from its retail stores in retaliation against the publication of Young and Simon’s new biography of its co-founder. In reality, this strategy is intended to represent something of a slap in the face for the unauthorized biography, which admittedly does a little more than merely aggrandize Jobs’ meteoric rise, fall and second coming as a leading technological innovator and icon in his own right. The affect of Apple’s strategy, however, seems to have backfired, if increased interest in the book itself is anything to go by.

The story begins by charting Jobs’ early life, looking for keys to his ambitions, later achievements and distinctively abrasive early management style. Born in California in 1955, Jobs was adopted by a working-class couple; a fact, the authors cite, as the origin of Jobs’ restless search for legitimation. Jobs’ early interest in electronics derives from a carbon microphone, lent to him by one of the electronics workers who populated his parents’ neighbourhood, close to HP and the growing electronics industry in California. After High School, Jobs chose the prestigious Reed College to study liberal arts, before dropping out after the first semester; ever aware of the opportunities, Jobs at least received a refund on his tuition in the process.

Jobs first met Steve Wozniak (‘Woz’), five years his senior, when he was thirteen. Wozniak shone as a rather square electronics whiz kid, while Jobs, with less inventiveness, exemplified a need as well as a willingness to reach his objective, whatever the cost. The two joined forces, producing their first major project, aptly named the blue box, which allowed users to make phone calls by tricking telephone

companies' computers into believing that they had received payment. This proved to be the beginning of their anti-establishment leanings that would characterize the early appeal of Apple to a generation of counter-culture technicians.

In 1974, Jobs got his first job with Atari in the burgeoning computer games sector, when he turned up one day at their offices, dressed in rags and looking like a hippie, stinking of BO, demanding to be hired. Ever on the lookout for a business opportunity, Jobs was later offered \$1000 to make the game Brickbats for Atari. Instead, Jobs asked Wozniak to do it for \$600, and duly pocketed a \$400 profit. One year later Wozniak found out, and his anger caused a rift in their partnership that would last a number of decades.

After the blue box came the Apple I, designed and built in Jobs' garage using Wozniak's revolutionary idea of a single circuit board. Spurred on by the interests of their hobbyist peers in the Homebrew Computer Club, Jobs and Wozniak founded Apple on April Fool's Day 1976 having raised \$1000 from the sale of personal goods—Woz's HP calculator and Jobs' VW van—with the intention of making computer boards for \$25 and selling them for \$50. When a local retailer placed an order worth \$25,000, they were in business.

Six months later with sales of the Apple I deteriorating, the Apple II took shape in Jobs' imagination and on Woz's circuit boards. It would have to be self-contained—a personal computer that was ready to go. Crucially, Jobs decided that owners of the original Apple could upgrade. While Wozniak again provided the electronic knowledge and innovation, Jobs' influence was felt in the look of the new Apple, in his charisma and energy that propelled the ideas into reality and caught the mood of consumer acceptability.

Regardless of Jobs' role in these groundbreaking achievements, the early chapters of the book must make somewhat uneasy reading for him, even now, as Wozniak and his fellow technicians emerge as the real electronic innovators. One is forced to ask what exactly the role of Jobs was. The authors find the answer to this lacuna in Jobs' distinctive concern with good design, his nose for consumer trends, as well as his rather hectoring management style that ultimately made the disparate ideas of the technicians into workable products. The authors argue that Jobs has that gift of charisma and a disdain for the accepted norms of corporate culture, evident in his Apple slogans—"The Journey is the Reward," "Beyond the Box," "Think Different." As an example of this, there is a story of how Jobs was so distraught by the first cases to be delivered for the new Apple II, that on the eve of its public exhibition, he ordered all staff to stay up all night sanding, filing and spray painting his alterations. The result was the now famous grey moulded plastic box that would quickly capture the hearts and minds of personal computer enthusiasts. These innovations made the Apple II into major competition for IBM in the personal computer market. Jobs knew that IBM's rejection of the PC, threatened to replay its earlier mistake in discarding the rise of Xerox as a peripheral technology with a limited future.

Spurred on by Xerox's own investment in Apple in the late 70s, Jobs also pioneered Apple's IPO in 1980. It became a major success, with 4.6 million shares sold inside of the first hour. This was the most successful IPO since the Ford Motor Company in the mid-1950s. The success of the Apple II gave Jobs the financial security to plan his next innovation. Still preoccupied with hardware, Jobs took control of the Lisa project to produce Apple's first business machine. As Lisa faltered, however, due to Jobs' own technical and marketing failures, he turned to a project that he himself had initially rejected, the Macintosh. Lisa's failure led Jobs to pour more time into Macintosh, which he sensed could become the next major icon, using windows-led software and a mouse. One of Jobs' characteristic interventions forced the design team to consider building a vertical machine. This new form came to distinguish the Macintosh's design from the other PCs at that time. In 1984 with the images of the Orwellian IBM projected on the screen behind him, Jobs removed the Macintosh from a small grey bag, and let it introduce itself with the aid of an early voice synthesizer. At the end the Mac thanked Jobs, who the machine said, had been like a "father to me." IBM just didn't have product launches like this.

The Macintosh, named after the developer's favourite apple, was based on the vision of a computer for the masses that incorporated such innovations as the Graphical User Interface. Regardless of the flaw from the technical point of view (there were no extension ports), the Macintosh realized Jobs' dream of making a

personal computer for the masses, so easy to use, that Jobs compared it to an electric toaster.

In 1985 having succeeded in building Apple into a billion dollar company, Jobs was forced out by the CEO. Jobs' failure with his pet projects coupled with the deficiencies of the Macintosh were directed straight at his poor and at times, abusive management skills. Associated with this was Jobs' reputation for a sensitive personality that on the one hand drove his achievements, but on the other, also led to destructive exchanges with colleagues.

By mutual agreement, Jobs left Apple in the mid-1980s. In a deal carefully negotiated with the Apple board, however, he was allowed to take a number of key employees with him, and to start a new venture that he fittingly called NeXT. This company wasn't set up as a direct threat to Apple, but rather promised to focus on the educational sector, one of Apple's consistently successful markets in the mid-80s. In 1986, Jobs sold all but one of his Apple shares, a move that he knew would still enable him to receive the company's Annual Report and to stay in contact.

After leaving Apple at a low point, Jobs' new company continued the mood of failure. Though clearly technologically advanced, the company's income depended almost entirely on a futuristic design for its principal project. It would soon be apparent to everyone that this was an expensive cul-de-sac and the project was not at all suited to its target market. Nevertheless, Jobs' change of interest from hardware to software, led to the NeXT operating system, and this held out the possibility of a return to Apple in the future. A little known fact that the authors identify, is how Jobs ploughed in up to \$20 million of his own money to keep NeXT afloat during this years.

Jobs was again in the right place at the right time when Star Wars director, George Lucas, decided to sell his animation company Pixar. Holding off from any initial interest, Jobs eventually acquired Pixar animation for one third of Lucas's asking price. Sensing the potential of Pixar's software, RenderMan, Jobs forged a potentially unbeatable if troubled alliance with Disney. After early successes with Toy Story, Toy Story 2, and Finding Nemo, some of which picked up Oscar nominations, Pixar became a recognized leader in the field.

Pixar's IPO lifted Jobs into the same class of techno-billionaire as Bill Gates. At the same time, Jobs' original venture, Apple, was going through a process of rationalization and downsizing. Though his NeXT computers were losing Jobs' own money at an unsustainable rate, its software proved attractive to Apple, and Jobs sold them this part of his company. After some behind-the-scenes Jobsian manoeuvring, for which he is now infamous in Silicon Valley, Apple's CEO resigned and Jobs, the prodigal son, returned to the source of his original inspiration. At the Mac Users conference in 2000, Jobs proudly announced the removal of the word "interim" from his title at the end of his presentation. The development of the iPod series came next. Its success meant that Jobs had been instrumental in the development of iconic products in three major industries.

Young and Simon's biography includes many personal details and personality quirks that surely still embarrass Jobs. This is especially true of the way he treated Wozniak and some of the pioneering Apple employees. There is also the early reference to Jobs' abandonment of a child named Lisa—we recall the same name as Jobs adopted for one of his pet projects at Apple—born to an unmarried girlfriend. Reconciliation did, however, follow later in life.

The book itself maintains a fast pace throughout—I read it in only two sittings—and the lack of specialized description means that even readers with little interest in the technology industry will find it interesting. The book is not necessarily about computers, as much as Jobs' iconic personality and how it was possible to start a multi-billion dollar company in a garage, and take it into the Forbes 500 within five years. Particularly important to the narrative are the descriptions of the axial points that changed the lives of Jobs as well as Apple, NeXT and Pixar.

The picture that emerges of Jobs is by no means that of an isolated rebel working eighteen-hour days. Jobs is more street-wise than the borg-like figure of Bill Gates, who actually resembles some kind of latter-day representative of the IBM monolith, producing functional but ultimately uninspiring products. Jobs' unique place in the development of Apple seems to be his management style that at once both compels

loyalty and disdain. At crucial junctures in his business life, Jobs swings precariously between providing the impetus to push forward projects in need of fresh momentum, or crush potentially successful ones that have reached a fragile stage in their life-cycle. While other reviewers have noted that much of the book stems from a synthesis of the authors' earlier works—and some parts are strikingly reminiscent of biographies available on the Web—the book articulates a convincing portrait of Jobs' role in the rise of Apple. Like Jobs himself, the book achieves so much in such a limited period of time, that it may perhaps leave at least some readers wondering what on earth they've been doing with their lives all this time.

Michael Thomas