



THE EVOLUTION OF A LIE

Chapter 6

*Figtree Anglican Church and the PSU are responsible for abuse of the
Dobbs family and Emma Nicholls*

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2016

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What was done to the Dobbs family by members of FAC and the diocesan organisation constituted abuse.

At various times during this period, as well as after the diocese decided to consider the case closed, I wrote to people such as the Archbishop Peter Jensen and Phillip Gerber and his successor as Director PSU, Glenn Murray, amongst others, pointing out that far from Scott being guilty of any misconduct, members of clergy and staff church workers of FAC had engaged, and continued to engage in the systematic mental, psychological and spiritual abuse of the Dobbs family, adults and children within the terms and within the jurisdiction of the Discipline Ordinance 2006 by hounding them out of church and cutting them off from their friends and their 'church life'.

Phillip Gerber refused to deal with this complaint, first raised in a formal manner in 2008 and for which further formal documents were submitted in early 2010. There was no response at all from Glenn Murray until in January 2011, after 10 months' silence, he purported to reject the claims as 'misconceived' and unsupported by evidence. He refused to explain this 'finding' so that Machelles Dobbs could provide evidence and answer his claim that it was misconceived to complain about brutal treatment by FAC of deeply committed Christians, especially as the worst of this treatment occurred **after** Emma's complaints were known to be unreliable.

The unwillingness of the diocese to carry out the terms of the Discipline Ordinance 2006 to properly receive and investigate these serious allegations against favoured and protected former and present members of the clergy and staff of FAC, among others, is a telling condemnation of both the process and the Christian foundation of FAC and the diocesan organisation.

Finally, in 2011 the complaint was referred to the PSC. The committee consisted of most of the same members who were signatories to the incompetent report and foolish recommendations which were based on the report of the investigator of the Emma Nicholls' complaint. Not surprisingly, behind closed doors in the absence of the complainants, these people decided that a complaint that children had been thrown out of church and cut off from their Christian friends was 'misconceived' and lacked evidence.

But this is far from the end of the matter, simply another example of the members of the diocesan organisation 'closing ranks' against people who have what ordinary, even non-Christian, people would clearly see as a case to be answered.

Finally, let us not forget the terrible wrong done to Emma Nicholls

Before things started to go wrong for her – the development of her obsessive love for Scott and her delusional belief that he loved her - things were very good for her in her relationship with the Dobbs family. She was welcomed into a warm and loving family of deeply committed Christians, adults and children.

All that changed. At first the Dobbs family tried to deal with her manifestations of a fixation on Scott in a firm but kindly manner, cutting out her opportunities to be alone with Scott but otherwise tolerant of her presence in the house.

But then her mother became involved, aided and abetted by Yvonne Gunning and Bruce Clarke (as the two main FAC offenders) with input from Helen Irvine to stop any conciliation of the issues. At best the incompetence and, at worst, the dishonesty of all those others involved in behalf of FAC and Sydney diocese contributed to what became devastation for her as well as the members of the Dobbs family. It was then that her life changed irrevocably for the worse.

Emma lost that which she highly valued: her relationship with all the Dobbs family, who were her lifeline in an increasingly difficult and disappointing battle with her various illnesses and how these cut her off from a 'normal' life and a young Christian woman's expectations of love, marriage and children and a home of her own.

Pathetically, she wrote to Scott in a very confused and confusing letter just before her final encounter with him in FAC lounge on 28 January 2006 while he and Nathan were serving coffee:

'You, Mabelle, & your children are really important to me & I love you all dearly & value the friendship I have with you very much and I wouldn't want to damage that in anyway.'
