



THE FIRST STONE REVISITED

Dr. Dobbs and the University of Wollongong.
Figtree Anglican Church and the Dobbs family.

In 1995 noted Australian feminist and author Helen Garner published her book 'The First Stone'. In this she examined the case of two charges of indecent assault that were brought by the Victorian Police against the then Master of Ormond College, Melbourne University. She tried to understand why the complaints were brought and why events unfolded the way they did. In that process she mused upon feminism and feminist ideology as it had developed from the days of early feminism when she was an activist. In 2008, Louise Greentree wrote about the way in which two student complaints (one anonymous) against a man who was once an Assistant Lecturer at the University of Wollongong, complaints which were never communicated to him at any relevant time, had found their way into material that was being used against him by the Anglican Church of Australia Professional Standards Unit Sydney Diocese (PSU) which was purporting to exercise a disciplinary role over him and the whole of his family in the Anglican Parish of Figtree. No doubt the Anglican Church of Australia Sydney Diocese would be particularly surprised to find that it was being used to further any form of feminist ideology, particularly in view of the Diocese's notorious opposition to the ordination of women. However, the author has found fascinating, and frightening parallels between the two cases which would indicate that women and men have been ill-served by the ideologues, both Christian and feminist. Further material has become available which throws more light on the very murky operations that led up to this situation.

Louise Greentree

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'The First Stone'¹ Revisited

Louise Greentree

Jesus said: 'Let the one among you who has done no wrong cast the first stone.' John 8.7

And God spoke all these words: 'You shall not give false testimony against your neighbour.'
The Ninth Commandment Exodus 20.1 and 16

In 1995 noted Australian feminist and author Helen Garner published her book 'The First Stone'. In this she examined the case of two charges of indecent assault that were brought by the Victorian Police against the then Master of Ormond College, Melbourne University. The Police were acting on the complaints of two female students. While recounting her journey to try to interview as many people involved in the case as possible (including the two complainants and a number of their supporters all of whom refused to be interviewed), she tried to understand why the complaints were brought and why events unfolded the way they did. In that process she mused upon feminism and feminist ideology as it had developed from the days of early feminism when she was an activist.

*In 2008, **Louise Greentree**² wrote the first edition of this article about the way in which two student complaints (one anonymous) against a man who was once an Assistant Lecturer at the University of Wollongong, complaints which were never communicated to him at any relevant time, had found their way into material that was being used against him by the Anglican Church of Australia Professional Standards Unit Sydney Diocese (PSU) which was purporting to exercise a disciplinary role over him and the whole of his family in the Anglican Parish of Figtree. No doubt the Anglican Church of Australia Sydney Diocese would be particularly surprised to find that it was being used to further any form of feminist ideology, particularly in view of the Diocese's notorious opposition to the ordination of women. However, the author has found fascinating, and frightening parallels between the two cases which would indicate that women and men have been ill-served by the ideologues, both Christian and feminist.*

In addition, of particular interest is the fact there are parallels between these two cases and the original case of the woman taken in adultery who was brought by the Jewish religious leaders one morning into the presence of Jesus as he taught in the Temple in Jerusalem. The important issue here is the false nature of this action by the religious leaders. This was not a case of honest indignation or

¹ The title refers to the book by Helen Garner: *'The First Stone. Some questions about sex and power'* 1995 Pan Macmillan Australia Pty Ltd Sydney and both titles refer to the saying of Jesus when he encountered the woman 'taken in adultery' who was brought before him by the religious leaders.

² Louise Greentree BA LLB LLM(Hons) ProfCertArb. Louise acknowledges the contributions of the many, both male and female, who have read this paper in draft and contributed ideas and comments from their own experiences, and in particular the commentary provided by the Rev. David Greentree. To read other articles about this and other cases see the web site www.churchdispute.com
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religious fervor, but an attempt to trap Jesus into recommending one of two courses of action, mutually damaging to his continuing ministry. The first would have been to endorse the law of Moses which provided for the stoning to death of adulterers, both the man and the woman, notwithstanding the fact that this penalty had not been carried out for hundreds of years, divorce plus financial compensation being the more usual remedy. But to make such a recommendation offended the law of the occupying nation, Rome, which did not provide for the death penalty in such cases. The second recommendation would be to say, 'do not stone her'. But this offended the law of God as revealed to Moses³. How adroitly Jesus turned the 'trap' around, saying, as reported in John 8.7: 'Let the one among you who has done no wrong cast the first stone.'

By setting a limit on how the killing could be carried out, by defining who might throw that first stone as 'he who has done no wrong' or in earlier translations 'he who is without sin', he ensured that no-one could carry out the law of Moses, because none were wholly righteous. In this passage the word 'sin' might be construed narrowly or broadly (as 'any sin'). The whole incident constituted a flagrant breach of the strict laws and procedures that were required by Jewish law before such a penalty could be carried out. Thus, even the narrow interpretation precluded the religious leaders and their witnesses from taking up that first stone.

In that case and in one of the two cases under discussion in this paper the women at the centre were and are pawns in a much more vicious power-play, and in both cases, to assist this objective the observance of proper procedures was similarly abandoned, and justice compromised.



In order to understand the parallels, it is necessary first to look at the nature of the complaints in each of the modern cases and how they were dealt with.

The Ormond College Case.

On 16 October 1991, the Master of Ormond College attended the 'Smoko', a student function that took place immediately after the formal Valedictory Dinner held at the college. After the formality of the dinner was over and the official guests had departed students and staff changed out of formal clothes and academic robes and settled down to the drinking, dancing and socializing that was part of the culture of the College at the time. While the Master's wife went to their house on campus, he decided to go and see 'what the students were doing'. Both the complaints arise from his attendance at the Smoko.

The first complaint was made by a young woman who is called Elizabeth Rosen in the book. The identities of both complainants were kept from publication by Court order in the ensuing Court proceedings. It is agreed that the Master ran into her in the corridor outside his office: they spoke, and he invited her into his office and offered her a drink, which she accepted. They talked for about 10 minutes during which she raised with him her sister's application to be accepted into the college. She

³ Leon Morris: *'The Gospel According to John'* Eerdmans Grand Rapids Michigan 1975: see the discussion of this passage in the Appendix pp.882 - 891

makes a number of allegations about him: that he complimented her, then, referring to a photograph of her, said that it gave him indecent thoughts; that he touched her breast and asked her for a 'real kiss'.⁴ The Master denied all of these allegations other than to say he did have a conversation with her in his office, and that he spoke to her at other times in the evening at the Smoko, where there were other students around. He specifically denied touching her.

The second complaint was made by another young woman, called Nicole Stewart in the book. The Master and the Vice-Master were both at the Smoko in public view. There was dancing and Nicole asked him to dance.⁵ The first dance was followed by slow music, and they danced in a more traditional dance hold. Nicole alleged that twice during that dance he placed his hand on her left breast. When she removed his hand to her waist he replaced it on her breast. The dance finished and he danced with someone else. The Master denied touching her on her breast.

That was the sum total of the complaints. Both arose out of events on the same evening over a period of just a few hours, and one of them in full view of many others. They were dealt with, first, by way of the students taking advice from senior College women who sensibly said they should get their exams done and out of the way, so there was a lapse of time over the exam period and then over the long vacation. The following year there was notification through a proxy to the Board of the College; there was some attempt to use an intra-College conciliation process only newly established; ultimately a complaint of indecent assault was made to the police. The complaints were heard in two separate cases, the one dismissed by the magistrate, and the second dismissed on appeal. Notwithstanding all of this, it was only then that a complaint was brought through the Equal Opportunities Board (Vic), rather inappropriately attempting to use conciliation after the Court cases had been dismissed; and ultimately a negotiated 'settlement' resulted in the two complainants apparently receiving an undisclosed sum of money, and the Master being placed in an untenable position of having to resign even though he had been vindicated by the Courts.

The University of Wollongong (UOW) Case.

On 4 November 2005, Dr. Dobbs, academic at UOW in the Faculty of Business, attended a committee meeting to discuss his application for permanent employment (or 'tenure'). His application was rejected. What he did not know was that the committee members had access to a Record of Interview signed by a former student, Corinne Cortese, alleging sexual harassment. He was never given an opportunity to defend himself against her claims.

He had been a possible whistleblower about the culture of bribery, corruption, plagiarism and soft marking that was prevalent amongst and for the benefit of overseas students in the faculty at both the UOW Wollongong NSW campus and its' off-shore campus in Dubai. There was a journalist 'sniffing

⁴ These are taken from the Police record of interview of the Master on 9 April 1992, set out in full in the book.

⁵ He describes it: 'Nicole Stewart offered to dance with me. It was what I would call distance mode, in the first instance. In other words she was three yards away gyrating rather vigorously and I was standing back looking very foolish.'

around' at the time investigating such a culture in UOW and in Business and Commerce faculties of other universities. The seriousness of any whistleblowing on this issue cannot be overestimated. There were ramifications for the integrity of the UOW Faculty's courses, the reputation of which would be fatally injured, affecting not only overseas student graduates but also local student graduates, whose opportunities for employment in a competitive market would be diminished. There was also the issue of accreditation of these courses through formal processes of tertiary education quality oversight, as well as accreditation of the courses to entitle overseas graduates to access generous conditions for permanent residency in Australia.

Dr. Dobbs had actual evidence of attempted bribery and instances of the alteration of fail marks to pass marks for overseas students, particularly in relation to a course in Dubai for which he was the supervisor. It is not hard to see that he had to be stopped by being discredited.

Unfortunately for the senior academics involved in this unsavoury project, Dr. Dobbs was, and is, a sincere Christian, and there was not a shadow of a complaint of sexual misbehaviour to be found against him: that is, until Helen Irvine, a senior academic in the faculty, remembered that when she had been speaking to a woman student sometime in 2005 and Dr. Dobbs' name came up, the woman 'pulled a face', and when asked why, told Helen that he had asked her, 1 or 2 years before - Helen is vague on this point - to have an affair with her, which she refused. She made no complaint at the time. Helen says she asked this woman to be sure to report it to the UOW Employment Equity & Diversity Unit (EEDU) if it happened again.

But they struck another snag: this woman, who we know is Lee Tran who called herself 'Anika Rose', flatly refused to make a complaint unless anonymously, which could not be accepted by the EEDU. And so, a complaint had to be manufactured and these academics had to find someone prepared to make the complaint, informally so that Dr. Dobbs would never know about it and be able to defend himself against it, and to make sure that the paucity of detail of the manufactured complaint could not be examined with any objectivity.

The plan worked: Corinne Cortese, a student of Dr. Dobbs for the second semester in 1999 only, worked with these women to manufacture an 'informal' complaint which was set out in the signed Record of Interview placed in Dr. Dobbs' personnel file the day before his application for permanent employment was considered by the UOW committee.

The thing is: had Dr. Dobbs known about this complaint, not only would his defense have shredded it, but he could also have identified Lee Tran as a student who had offered to have an affair with him, which he declined.

The main personnel involved in the UOW 'case':

Dr. Scott Dobbs: Dr. Dobbs obtained his double degree in Law and Business at UOW and then went on to research for a PhD which was awarded in 2003. As he was supporting his wife Machele and six children, during this time he was also employed on a casual basis as a tutor. In second semester 1999 he tutored a class of some 15 or 16 students in their final year of business studies which included Corinne Cortese as a student. This was his only contact with her when she was a student of his, and later contact after she had left the university at the end of that year - admitted by Corinne Cortese - was fleeting.

Corinne Cortese: a member of Dr. Dobbs' tutorial class in second semester 1999, otherwise she had nothing but minimal personal contact with him on just two occasions in the presence of many people. On 2 November 2005 she attended an interview, accompanied by Mary Kaidonis (Head of the Department and her PhD supervisor at the time) with the director UOW EEDU, Robyn Weekes, to make an 'informal complaint' against Dr. Dobbs alleging incidents of sexual harassment in 1999, 2002 and 2004. She signed a Record of Interview the next day, being the day before Dr. Dobbs' application for permanent employment was to be considered by the UOW committee. She authorised Robin Weekes to give the Record of Interview to Prof. John Patterson, the Chairman of that committee. This document was never sent to Dr. Dobbs, nor even discussed in his presence at the committee meeting that he attended, thus denying him natural justice.

An anonymous 'Girl Y', being Lee Tran calling herself 'Anika Rose': Sometime in about 2003 this woman student approached Dr. Dobbs and offered to have an affair with him⁶. He refused – with a wife, 6 children and his heavy teaching load at UOW not only had he no inclination to have an affair (whether or not with this woman) but surely, he did not have the time! Sometime in 2005, this woman spoke to Helen Irvine and said that Dr. Dobbs had proposed having an affair with her! Whichever version is believed, it is clear that they did not have an affair and no contact from that point onwards. In the second half of 2005, either Helen Irvine reported Anika Rose's version to Mary Kaidonis and/or another UOW academic in the same division of the Faculty of Business, Jane Edwards (although she does not admit it), or with her encouragement Anika Rose did so (Helen does not admit this either). In any event, on 1 May 2007, Helen Irvine tracked her down for another interview for the purposes of bringing her still anonymous allegation into Figtree Anglican church.

Mary Kaidonis: Head of the Department in the Faculty of Business where both Dr. Dobbs and Helen Irvine were employed on the academic staff, and both she and Helen Irvine were Corinne Cortese's PhD supervisors in 2005. Her role in the 'informal complaint' is outlined above. She was a member of the committee and, according to another member of the committee (preferring to remain un-named because the deliberations of the committee were supposed to be kept secret), although Mary Kaidonis did not take the opportunity to discuss the document and its' contents with Dr. Dobbs when he appeared before the committee, she was highly vocal against his application on the basis of that document, behind his back in discussions from which he was excluded.

Robyn Weekes: Director of the UOW EEDU with whom the meeting on 2 November 2005 with Corinne Cortese and Mary Kaidonis was held. She accepted the informal complaint from Corinne

⁶ It was not unusual for students to try to ensure a favourable mark by offering sexual or other bribes which could operate as blackmail if required. Although this may not have been this woman's motivation: Dr. Dobbs is a tall, handsome man described as having a 'charismatic' personality. There may have been on her part a genuine attraction. If so, his rejection of her may have been all the more bitter.

Cortese, as disclosed in the signed Record of Interview dated 3 November 2005, and with permission, passed this to Prof. John Patterson, Chair of the committee which met the next day to consider Dr. Dobbs' application for permanent appointment to the academic staff. She did not make a copy available to Dr. Dobbs nor notify him of the existence of the complaint and he was denied the opportunity to defend himself, in contravention of both the principles of natural justice and the UOW code for dealing with complaints.

Helen Irvine: Senior Lecturer at UOW in the Faculty of Business. See above for her involvement in the bringing of the complaint by Corinne Cortese. She was instrumental in bringing the allegations into Figtree Anglican Church, where she was the wife of the Senior Minister the rev. Rod Irvine, despite him begging her not to do so, according to what she herself told the diocesan investigator.

Prof. John Patterson: Chair of the Academic Probations Committee UOW who received the Record of Interview from Robyn Weekes, failed to inform Dr. Dobbs of the existence of the document and the complaint, allowed discussion of the complaint 'behind Dr. Dobbs' back' in committee sessions that took place in his absence and failed to discuss it with him in a session which took place in his presence. Dr. Dobbs' application for permanent employment was rejected by the committee. Even in Dr. Dobbs' appeal, and in a later private conversation confirming the failure of his appeal, Prof. Patterson made no mention of the complaint.

Sources:

The source materials divide into two time-frames:

First, November 2005: there is one document, dated 3 November 2005, which constitutes the ONLY material put forward as a complaint to the UOW EEDU director Robyn Weekes. There is nothing else, no other complaints. Nor, of course, is there any answering material from Dr. Dobbs because he was never made aware of the existence of the complaint while employed at UOW, nor until much later.

Second, May 2007-January 2008: some handwritten notes of a telephone conversation between Helen Irvine and the Executive Minister the rev. Bruce Clarke of Figtree Anglican Church on 1 May 2007 and typewritten notes prepared from these; the transcript of the interviews given by Helen Irvine and Corinne Cortese to the diocesan investigator Ken Taylor later in 2007 and the signed statements prepared from those interviews, and the investigator's report in which he refers to the information in these signed statements in support of the unrelated complaint. These documents were collected or produced by Ken Taylor in the course of his investigation of a totally unrelated complaint concerning an OCD-affected young woman, Emma Nicholls, whose mother Lee Nicholls brought a complaint (originally anonymously) to the Figtree Anglican Church Children's Minister Yvonne Gunning on 1 February 2007.

How many UOW students complained about Dr. Dobbs, according to Helen Irvine?*Four?*

At one stage, according to Helen Irvine speaking to FAC's Executive Minister the Rev. Bruce Clarke, there were up to four UOW complainants. In the typewritten notes and the handwritten notes from which they had been prepared, four persons are referred to: Corinne Cortese, Girl X, Girl Y and Girl Z also identified as 'Anna-Marie'.

Three?

However, further comparison of details of their complaints makes it very clear that the woman designated Girl X is Corinne Cortese. One other student (Girl Y) spoke on the telephone with Helen Irvine but refused to allow her name or identifying details to be disclosed, although, as Helen tells Ken Taylor the investigator instructed by the PSU's Phillip Gerber, when she told Dr. Dobbs something about the anonymous 'Girl Y' Dr. Dobbs correctly identified her as Lee Tran, known as 'Anika Rose', and said that she had tried to initiate a sexual relationship with him, which he declined. In the FAC materials there is only Helen's signed statement to Ken Taylor about what 'Girl Y' allegedly said to her, including a reference to an unidentified woman who was not a student at UOW who is supposed to have made a complaint (to whom? Helen did not know, so neither do we) about Dr. Dobbs. She was never produced to make a statement, and no details of her complaint are given, which is suspiciously like fabrication.

The handwritten notes do not support what Helen, in her interview and signed statement, claims 'Girl Y' said to her.

Then there is the other person identified in the notes as Girl Z 'Anna Maria' and referred to in the signed declaration of Helen Irvine, but there is no complaint by her nor any complaint implicit in the story concerning her. That story is that Scott Dobbs asked the Head of the Department that he not be required to share his office, when he was a PhD student, with her.

Two?

In the Record of Interview signed by Corinne Cortese for UOW, Mary Kaidonis refers to another, anonymous, female Asian student who had made a 'non-sexual' complaint about Dr. Dobbs, but she disappears without trace after the Record of Interview had done its' job to ensure that Dr. Dobbs' application for permanent employment was denied. 'Anna Maria' also disappears without trace, and she is not interviewed by Ken Taylor, despite Helen Irvine holding up the example of her complaint as 'evidence' that Mabelle Dobbs had prohibited Dr. Dobbs from sharing an office with a pretty young woman. This, she says, is evidence that Mabelle has had 'problems' with Dr. Dobbs' before: she does not say outright, but presumably she is arguing that Dr. Dobbs is subject to outbursts of unbridled lust, especially towards young women aged 20 to 23. Helen Irvine seems untroubled by the lack of any evidence, let alone the strong chain of evidence which would be needed to make such a grave accusation against a man who is a highly respected professional and well-regarded member of the congregation of Figtree Anglican Church for, at that time, some 12 years without a whisper of any complaint against him.

One.

When it came down to it, of all ‘four’ (or more), only Corinne Cortese gave an interview and signed a statement in full knowledge that this was going to be used to keep Dr. Dobbs from attending church – ‘he should be thrown out of church’, she (a non-Christian and non-churchgoer) says with spiteful satisfaction – and, hopefully, to destroy his marriage and his professional reputation.

The events complained about.

Corinne Cortese:

Her complaints are three-fold according to her signed statement for the PSU:

Complaint 1: 1999.

In 1999 Corinne was an undergraduate student in a tutorial group of some 15-16 students which Scott Dobbs led once a week for a period of 13 weeks in the second semester. During that time he did not speak to her ‘inappropriately’ (her word) other than to say that she was pretty and talented when recommending that she do an Honours degree⁷. He did not touch her. The one time that she was in his office he did not close the door. He seemed to favour her in the tutorial, and he looked at her and other students teased her about it⁸. When he recommended that she do an Honours degree she refused as she had accepted a job with a major accounting firm and did not want to delay taking up that position⁹.

That is the totality of her first complaint concerning her relationship with the assistant lecturer while she was a member of his tutorial class. This is the only complaint concerning the time when she was a student of Scott Dobbs. After that, she completed her degree, worked at the major accounting firm for a year, then joined the academic staff at Macquarie University and enrolled as a doctoral candidate. She was not during that time, or ever, connected in any way with Figtree Anglican Church.

Complaint 2: 2001.

In 2001, she was about 6 months into her employment at Macquarie University and she came down to UOW for a one-day doctoral colloquium. She says that Scott approached her and said: ‘*Oh, you’re so beautiful and I’m so happy so see that you’ve come back to this type of work.*’ On the same day she saw him at the lunch table with a group of people, but they not sit near each other or speak to each other at all for the rest of the day. But, she says that he was ‘*sort of making eye contact with me all afternoon.*’¹⁰

That is the totality of her second complaint. She was neither a student nor colleague of his at the time, nor associated with UOW, nor with Figtree Anglican Church.

⁷ Her signed statement made 27 September 2007 Par 9.

⁸ Pars. 5 and 7.

⁹ Par 6.

¹⁰ Pars 10 and 11.

Complaint 3: 2001, 'a week later'.

In 2001, 'a week later' she received an email from a hotmail coded address titled '*write to me if you're lucky*'¹¹. She cannot remember the detail of what it said, she has since deleted it, and it came to her through her Macquarie University email address which she has not had access to since leaving that University. She says it was signed '*from a secret admirer*'. She replied to the email and held a further email conversation with the person who, she says, signed following emails '*Scotty*'. She assumed that this was her former tutor (despite having had no social relationship with him at all) and she seems to have exchanged several emails with the unknown person before terminating the 'conversation'.

That is the totality of her third complaint. She was neither a student nor colleague of Dr. Dobbs at the time, nor associated with the UOW in any way, nor with Figtree Anglican Church.

To Summarize her allegations:

1. In 1999 Dr. Dobbs, tutor, looked at a student, Corinne Cortese in his tutorials over the period of one semester and her friends teased her about it, calling her such things as 'teacher's pet'. When she was alone with him, briefly, in his office (collecting her assignment) he left the door open and did not behave in any way inappropriately¹².
2. In 2001 after she had left UOW and was employed at Macquarie University, she says that when they met by chance at a doctoral conference at UOW, he paid her a compliment and said he was happy she was doing academic work, sat at the lunch table among many other people (but not beside or near her) and in the afternoon in the lecture hall they apparently made eye contact.
3. About 1 week later in 2001, she says that she received on her Macquarie University email system an email from anonymous hotmail email address titled '*write to me if you're lucky*'. It was signed '*a secret admirer*'. Despite the many warnings that are given urging people not even to open let alone reply to anonymous emails, she opened it, replied to it and entered into an email conversation with someone she says signed following emails '*Scotty*'. After a few exchanges she stopped replying and the emails stopped. She did not retain the emails, complain at the time, and she says (initially at least) that she did not remember what they said.

There was no contemporaneous complaint concerning any of these incidents. In fact, Scott Dobbs had not been told about these complaints until Helen Irvine spoke to him on the telephone, first at or around Easter 2007 and again on 1 May 2007 in general and rather exaggerated terms.

¹¹ Par 13

¹² To the investigator she tells, hilariously, that she felt uncomfortable (on no evidence of previous misbehaviour) and that she 'backed into the room' and 'backed around' the room and 'backed out again', no doubt to be careful not to present a tempting bottom towards him. Her evidence to the investigator generally descended to these depths of imaginative detail, unsupported by anything remotely objective.

Helen Irvine's involvement.

In her first conversation with Dr. Dobbs, he says that Helen Irvine attempted blackmail: he says she told him that unless he withdrew his defense to the complaint by Emma Nicholls¹³, she would broadcast the complaints from women students at UOW. As he was not aware of any complaints by UOW female students, he did not do so, and so she did.

He was unaware of full details by whom and about what the complaints were made until January 2008 when he read the signed statements that had been made by Corinne Cortese and Helen Irvine in September 2007, and saw the signed Record of Interview that had, mysteriously, made its way out of his UOW personnel file and into the hands of the investigator.

Helen Irvine in her signed statement dated 18 September tells a much more highly-coloured version of Corinne's story. This is an interesting example of why hearsay evidence is so unreliable, especially when compared with the direct evidence of the person involved. Helen makes the following points:

1. In paragraph 23 she says she 'found out' about Corinne's complaint when she and her husband Irvine dined with a former colleague '*about 12 – 18 months ago*'¹⁴, and '*he told us that he was aware that Scott had made sexual advances towards Corinne. He was an associate lecturer at the university and Corinne had told him about it.*' Then in par 24: '*Corinne was a student when Scott made advances towards her. She would have been probably 20 or so. It was before she went to Macquarie University So it would have been when she was an undergraduate.*'

Readers who have followed the account that Corinne herself gives, discussed above, will have already noted three things here:

- (a) The first is that Corinne herself has not stated that Scott made sexual advances to her in the only incident of which she complains while an undergraduate student, namely of being looked at by him during the weekly tutorial in one semester. She is clear in her signed statement that he never touched her¹⁵ or made any advances to her. She makes it clear that she had no contact with him at all outside the tutorials and no social contact. She says that she was only alone with him once in all that time, in his room with the door open when she went to collect an essay from him, and he did not do anything other than pay her a compliment and, as instructed by his supervisor, offer her the opportunity to do an Honours year for her undergraduate degree. So where did this story of sexual advances while she was his student originate?

¹³ Emma Nicholls was an emotionally immature and OCD-affected young woman with other mental and physical problems who was befriended by the Dobbs' daughters. Her mother had complained to FAC's Children's Minister Yvonne Gunning that Emma, aged 20, had 'fallen in love' with Dr. Dobbs, but at the time that Helen Irvine spoke to Dr. Dobbs, that complaint was collapsing as the FAC leadership became aware of her mental illness and other problems that there were with the case, which ultimately had to be withdrawn and dismissed. See my article '*A Cautionary Tale*'.

¹⁴ That is, between about April and September 2006.

¹⁵ Apart from an 'afterthought' in her interview that 'maybe' he put his hand on her arm in the photocopy room 'or something', which would have been a gift to anyone cross-examining her.

- (b) The second point is that at that stage Corinne apparently had not made any complaint about any time other than this about when she was an undergraduate student at UOW. The ‘other stuff’ was not mentioned to that member of the academic staff.
- (c) The third point is this: how much of the ‘story’ has been embroidered by Helen in bringing it to members of the parish and to the diocesan investigator? If Helen has characterised Corinne’s complaint in that form from that time, then in her dealings with Figtree parish leadership, and in those dealings of her husband the Senior Minister of Figtree parish, she and he must consider carefully their involvement in the spread of unfounded gossip, that is: *‘bearing false witness against their neighbour’*¹⁶. There is the disturbing fact that as early as 17 December 2006 a person in another state who was not involved with Dr. Dobbs or the university but was in email contact with Emma Nicholls and her mother Lee (who was in contact with Yvonne Gunning of the parish) described him in an email as a ‘sexual predator’ and said that he most likely was dismissed from the University for making sexual advances to students. Where did this come from if not from Helen and/or Rod Irvine originally, via Yvonne Gunning on the parish staff, to whom they had spoken and thence to Lee Nicholls and forward to Lance Wearmouth, and from him to Emma?
2. That, per paragraph 24, Helen did not do anything to follow this up until about April 2007 when she invited Corinne to have coffee with her. Corinne then told her all about it. In paragraph 25 Helen then sets out her version of what Corinne is said to have told her:
- a. That there was an occasion when he asked her to go with him to get some assignments from his room. *‘I think she felt a little uncomfortable on that occasion. I don’t think anything happened in his room.’*
 - b. He favoured her in class and other people noticed and called her ‘teacher’s pet’
 - c. Then, after she’d gone to Macquarie University: *‘And then she started getting anonymous emails... And then eventually she found out who they were from. She asked the person to identify himself (sic)’*¹⁷
3. What is extraordinary is that on the basis of the above conversation Helen says in paragraph 28: *‘After speaking to Corinne I came back to my office and rang the other young woman straight away (Girl Y?), because I thought this is serious.’*

¹⁶ As Christians one would expect them to be disturbed at the thought they had breached the ninth Commandment.

¹⁷ At this stage did Helen Irvine do anything to correct the allegation that there had been sexually predatory behaviour by Dr. Dobbs towards Corinne while he was her tutor and that this was the reason he was not granted tenure? No. In fact the parish rumour mill ran hot and strong after this. Helen told him on the telephone and in person in early May 2007 that there were a number of girls from the University who had complained about his sexually predatory behaviour. She repeated this to the parish leadership and the Director of the diocesan PSU. When it came to the crunch of having to support her statements in writing, then it was a much reduced tale.

The reader who is already aware that this is virtually the entire content of Corinne's complaints, (apart from seeing him at the doctoral conference in 2002 over lunch and in the lecture hall in the afternoon) must wonder what on earth Helen Irvine thought was serious about these complaints. Even if he had had an anonymous email conversation with Corinne (which he denies)¹⁸ when she was on the staff of another University and embarked on postgraduate work, would that not be something that a woman then aged 23-24 years could deal with if it was unwelcome? All she had to do, which she said that she did eventually do, was to stop replying to the emails. Why would Helen Irvine think that there was an issue?

The answer to this question lies at least partly in a particularly extreme version of feminist theory which is discussed below.

Corinne Cortese and the 'Record of Interview':

In it Corinne is recorded as acknowledging that there is a significant time lag since '*the behaviour occurred*' but that she '*has come forward at this time with Mary Kaidonis' support in the knowledge that Scott is seeking confirmation of his employment at UOW.*' It notes that she is not willing to lodge a formal complaint¹⁹. She is concerned that should she do so the matter would not remain confidential. She says that she fears she will be the target of faculty gossip and innuendo and labeled a 'troublemaker' in that event. She is looking for a career as an academic on completion of her PhD.²⁰

In this meeting she has added another occasion, which she does not refer to in her signed statement, namely in 2004 at the annual doctoral conference: she says that Scott said, '*You can please me anytime.*' She does not give any context to the statement. She also says in the Record of Interview but not in her signed statement that in early 2005 she refused his offer of casual tutoring work in Summer Session '*because of previous experience*' even though she needed the money. There is no complaint about any inappropriate behaviour when he was offering her the job.²¹ Was she really a shy and shocked little snowflake who needed to be protected and could not have contact with Dr. Dobbs even when he was clearly disinterestedly professional, or was it that she had another agenda that she was pursuing? This will be explored later.

The Record of Interview goes on to say two other things of particular interest: the first is that she '*has agreed that these notes may be provided to Professor Patterson as chair of the Academic Probations Committee*'; and secondly: Mary Kaidonis indicated that she had witnessed another incident, not of a

¹⁸ Par 12.

¹⁹ It is arguable that she had any grounds to do so: only one of the complaints refers to a time (six years before) when she was his student for a semester and does not disclose anything of significance. The other two refer to a time when she was employed at another university. It is highly doubtful that the UOW would have jurisdiction in such a case even had it involved anything of significance.

²⁰ Record of Interview signed by all three and dated 4 November 2005.

²¹ Surprisingly, Corinne is rather coy and perhaps she is suffering from selective amnesia in her interview and signed statement for the investigator. She says in par 14 'I didn't speak to anybody else (*other than her Mum and Dad*) about it (*the emails*), not at that time, although I might have reported it later to the EED at the University'. In later pars 16 – 18 she says that she did make a complaint about '*some guy who was being a pest*'. She says: 'I don't specifically remember that I complained to them about (Scott), but I think that I could have at the same time that I complained about the other guy.' There is no mention of another 'guy' in the Record of Interview. There was no record of either in Dr. Dobbs' personnel file when he obtained it from UOW.

sexual nature²² involving him and a female student, which caused her further concern as to his judgment in dealing with female students. She indicated that she was prepared to provide this information to the Probations Committee as a Faculty of Commerce representative on the committee 'should issues of this nature be explored.'²³

Other students referred to in Corinne Cortese's declaration: she says that when she left Macquarie University in 2003, she took some casual work at Wollongong University while waiting for to commence her PhD research. She says she was anxious about coming back because Scott Dobbs was still there. But her closest friend JA said she'd heard about another student who had a problem with him in the past²⁴. This was a Chinese student and '*there was a sexual harassment issue that had been reported to the university.*'²⁵ But, again, there was no complaint of this recorded on Scott's personnel file, and he was unaware of this until he read it in Corinne's statement in January 2008.

After all of the above, Corinne Cortese goes on to say in her signed declaration: '**(He) never attempted to touch me in any way, or kiss me. Maybe once or twice he put his hand on my arm if we were in the photocopying room or something. I never saw him behaving inappropriately with other women.**'²⁶

Readers will note that for Ken Taylor she has added this extra 'maybe', despite saying categorically that Dr. Dobbs never attempted to touch or kiss her in any way. This also raises the suspicion of over-elaboration of a fabricated story.

Other complainants:

Apart from the attempt to double-up the complaints of Girl X and Corinne Cortese, there has been a great effort to muddy the waters with one anonymous complainant, termed Girl Y, and one called Girl Z 'Anna Maria' referred to above, and then within the statutory declarations of both Corinne Cortese and Helen Irvine the references to other unnamed persons with no verifiable details.

Girl Y²⁷: In her interview with the PSU investigator, Helen Irvine said that when she talked to Dr. Dobbs about Girl Y he correctly identified her as Lee Tran, who called herself Anika Rose. Her complaints are recorded only in the reports, handwritten and typed of the telephone conversation apparently with Helen Irvine. According to Helen's signed statement for the PSU the complaint is that Dr. Dobbs tried to kiss her

²² Her words, emphasis added.

²³ As Head of the Department, her opinion would have carried weight with the committee members, and she would have been free to raise 'issues of this nature'.

²⁴ This is now third-hand hearsay.

²⁵ Pars 15 and 16. But Mary Kaidonis, when she refers to an Asian student making a complaint, says it was 'non-sexual'.

²⁶ Par 20. The use of the word 'maybe' is an interesting abandonment of certainty, leaving the conclusion that it could just as easily be 'maybe he did not ...'.

²⁷ There are some handwritten notes on the PSU Investigator's file dealing with someone called Girl Y. One page is simply headed Girl Y and another page is headed 'HI S@ University with C'. Then there are some typewritten notes of 'HI Phone Conversation RE SD and Allegations at the University.' It is unclear from the notes themselves who made them, but from other evidence it is certain that they were made by the FAC Executive Minister, the rev. Bruce Clarke.

once. That is the totality of the complaint and it is not confirmed in the handwritten notes that would appear to be of a telephone conversation with or about Girl Y. The following is the handwritten record of what Helen says on the telephone to Bruce Clarke that Anika Rose is supposed to have said to her:

'He is an actor – doesn't trust him. Not mentally stable. If he found out it was me – afraid he would hurt me. Maybe he would kill me if it (sic) he found out if I testified. If you tell anyone – your word against mine. I've had complaints before – but it never stands up. Sent emails. I've had a vasectomy. You can just enjoy me. You should ban him from church and tell all the others about him.

She doesn't want to be named because she is very intimidated by him and thinks she (sic) is mentally unstable.'

These notes form the basis of the signed statement Helen Irvine made, prepared from the transcript of her interview with PSU investigator Ken Taylor, together with her recollections of a conversation with Anika Rose which she says occurred in 2005²⁸ relating apparently to one incident which took place 'in 2003 or 2004'.

Perhaps the most significant statement among all the hearsay material in her signed declaration is this: ***'I don't think he's done anything to her. I think it was more the feeling that he might. She didn't give me any details about whether he'd touched her or anything and I didn't ask.'***²⁹

Helen also says that when (in 2007) she challenged Dr. Dobbs about his relations with women at the university he named Anika Rose and said that she had wanted to have an affair with him. Much is made elsewhere about Anika Rose's knowledge that he had undergone a vasectomy, but this was common knowledge in the Faculty and Figtree Anglican church because it was a joke in the Dobbs family about how, a matter of mere weeks before undergoing surgery, he found out that Mabelle was pregnant with their sixth child, who 'almost didn't make it!' And so at least two people employed at the University in the same faculty, namely Helen Irvine and Ann Abrahams, knew this story, let alone his other former colleagues. One hesitates to suggest that Helen Irvine herself added details known to her as if they were known to Anika Rose, confident that she could not be contradicted because Anika Rose was intent on remaining anonymous. Perhaps someone else coached Anika Rose and Helen Irvine was the 'patsy' reporting this in self-righteous ignorance.

Girl Z: This is recorded on the same handwritten notes. The statement is that the Scott '*made a complaint about sharing a room with her.*' Her first name is noted down as 'AM'. Elsewhere this is expanded to 'Anna Marie'. The only other reference to this is in Helen's statutory declaration. She says that this would have been in 1997 or 1998. No reason is advanced for this apart from speculative, fanciful and insulting comments by Helen Irvine about Mrs. Dobbs.³⁰

²⁸ Par. 12

²⁹ Par 17

³⁰ Helen says, in par.21 of her signed statement of 18 September 2007: 'There was another episode involving a young woman called Anna Marie. ...about 1997 or 1998 ... there was a bit of pressure on rooms and he was asked to share with a young reasonably attractive female PhD student. As a Christian, I could understand why Mabelle

Helen Irvine continues: *'Scott went and talked to the Head of School and said he didn't want to share a room with a girl like that.'*³¹

That is the totality of the 'complaint' which, if of any significance as to content, in any event was by Dr. Dobbs about Girl Z not the other way around.

Other students whose relationship with Scott Helen Irvine says she had 'concerns about':³²

1. *'I went to see Scott and his office door was shut. I knocked on the door and went in. He had a young female Asian student there. They weren't doing anything.'*³³
2. *'There was another time I heard screaming coming from his office and I went round there. It was a girl having a bit of a tantrum with Scott thinking she should have got another exam or whatever. ... I don't think that related to anything improper.'*³⁴
3. *'(Girl Y) actually told me that Scott had also pursued a friend of hers. That girl was also of a similar age and she might have been a student at the university. I'm not sure. I don't know her name.'*³⁵
4. *'I started to think are there other girls out there that I don't know about. It certainly suggests that there are ...'*³⁶
5. *'I know there were a few complaints by students against him at the time. ... I know some students complained he was a racist. And I think he refuted those complaints.'*³⁷

wouldn't have wanted him to share a room with a young attractive girl. ... In the light of later events, however, I can see maybe why Mabelle was upset about the sharing arrangement. *It does suggest a history.*' (emphasis added). Later in her statement in par 22 she says about his wife: 'I would describe Mabelle as very insecure.' There is no direct evidence from Helen (or anyone else) as to why Scott Dobbs did not want to share his room with Anna Marie. Nor is there any justification for describing this as 'another episode' – of what? What sort of 'history' could it possibly suggest? The reader gets the sense of Helen trying very hard to imbue the incident with some notion of sexual impropriety on Scott's part, then and earlier, where there is absolutely no evidence to support that.

³¹ Par 21. Helen tries to explain why he did this by saying that his wife would not want him to share with a pretty girl, but there is nothing to support this surmise. When one adds this to the large number of personally derogatory and irrelevant things she says about Mrs. Dobbs and her children in her signed statement, it is difficult to give such a statement credence.

³² Par 11

³³ Par 11

³⁴ Par 12

³⁵ Par 15 – anonymous second-hand hearsay.

³⁶ Par 35. So much for the analytical academic mind applying a rigorous approach to drawing conclusions from verified data! Her statements like these would have been a gift to someone cross-examining her to demonstrate her malice.

³⁷ He most certainly did. A petition signed by a large number of class mates of the complaining students testified that the complainants were lazy and disruptive in class, and that there was no substance to their complaint. When Dr. Dobbs asked in his interview with the Academic Probations committee whether this complaint was being considered, he was told by Prof. Patterson that it was not.

Where does the Anglican Church in Australia Sydney Diocese come into this?

The reader would be excused for wondering what two ‘complaints’, one of which is anonymous, plus several nebulous, unverifiable pieces of second- and third-hand gossip, plus demonstrated malice, relating to a few women in vague connection (or even no known connection) with UOW, and with no connection with the Anglican Church in Australia has to do with the Anglican Church of Australia Sydney Diocese and its Professional Standards Unit.³⁸ The short answer is that the Discipline Ordinance 2006 Sydney Diocese allows the Professional Standards Committee to take into account ‘any other offences committed by the person against whom the complaint has been made’ when determining what recommendation should be made as to a penalty or for further dealing with the complaint.³⁹ ‘Offences’ is not defined in the Ordinance. Therefore it is not clear whether the term is confined to criminal offences under State and Federal law or includes or is merely confined to the ‘offences’ under the Ordinance such as are referred to in clause 24 ‘Offences in relation to an investigation.’⁴⁰ Another reading of the Ordinance suggests that the proper description would be ‘wrongdoing’ which is defined in the Ordinance and which includes ‘(b) an offence specified by canon, ordinance or rule.’⁴¹ But there is the suspicion that the answer is this: it can mean whatever the Professional Standards Committee and the Director PSU wants it to mean.

In this case it would appear that the broadest possible interpretation is being applied: that is, where any other ‘offences’ can be proved (or even just alleged), regardless of the type or any connection with the Anglican Church in Australia, and regardless of when, or how long ago they are said to have occurred (there is no Statute of Limitations here) these shall be used to bolster up the complaint under the Discipline Ordinance 2006 and to increase the penalty recommended by the Committee. There are obvious fallacies of reasoning in this approach to be discussed elsewhere.

In the Figtree Anglican Church case where are the additional proven ‘offences’ under any interpretation of any canon, ordinance, or rule? There are none. Yet, Helen Irvine canvassed Corinne Cortese and Anika Rose in April 2007 at a time when the FAC leadership was forced to acknowledge that Emma Nicholls’ case was collapsing and that the director PSU had identified it as ‘a misunderstanding of boundaries’ by a vulnerable woman) or even earlier.⁴² This allowed the spread of virulent gossip

³⁸ The broad answer to this – that the Diocese and the Professional Standards Commission of the national church have been seriously misled by a piece of fallacious reasoning in formulating their response to the issue of child abuse in the church – is a discussion for another paper.

³⁹ 34(2)(k)

⁴⁰ The clause purports to make it an ‘offence’ for a person not to comply with notices issued by the investigator or to mislead or obstruct the investigation. The clause can only be enforced against licensed clergy or persons in holy orders or a paid church worker holding a lay worker’s authority.

⁴¹ This is another instance of less than precise drafting in this Ordinance.

⁴² In an email dated 17 December 2006 from Lance Wearmouth, Emma Nicholls’ trusted online prayer partner, to her he refers to the probability that Dr. Dobbs had to leave UOW because of complaints by young women about him. He has agreed with me that he must have been told this by Lee Nicholls (or Emma Nicholls), who was in contact with FAC staff member Yvonne Gunning. It is not difficult to trace the source of this piece of scurrilous gossip from Yvonne Gunning back to the rev. Rod Irvine and, particularly, to his wife Helen as early as this, well before Dr. Dobbs was made aware of any complaints by anyone. In my article ‘*A Cautionary Tale*’ I postulate that

throughout the parish that Dr. Dobbs was some sort of serial sexual predator on young women. It was not until the investigator completed taking statements that the paucity of the allegations promoted by Helen Irvine have been revealed. It has now been laid open for all to see the lack of grounds for complaint coupled with evidence of corrosive malice that is contained in the signed statement of Corinne Cortese together with her secret 'informal complaint' to the UOW EED unit for the clear, and sole purpose, to stop him obtaining permanent employment.

Who is Corinne Cortese?

Having read the 'complaints', the reader would be excused for envisaging a timid and indeed 'vulnerable' young woman⁴³ who, even if she is not within the category of being a person under a legal incapacity as defined in the Discipline Ordinance 2006⁴⁴, is still bordering on the same. But the reader can view Corinne's details on the UOW web site. They can see photos of her, good-looking with flowing long hair, and with an air of complete self-confidence. In one photo she is shown smiling confidently at the camera, sipping a glass of 'bubbly' beside the UOW Vice-Chancellor at the opening of a new research centre. She duly completed her PhD and took a Lecturer position with UOW in the Faculty of Business. She is now (2018) Senior Lecturer.

The question that occurs most forcefully is this: if she is not 'vulnerable' nor under a legal incapacity, not in 1999 when she was a student in Scott's tutorial, nor in 2002 when she was working as an academic at Macquarie University and attending a doctoral conference, nor in 2006 when she had obtained both her PhD and a position on the academic staff of UOW nor in late 2007 when she signed her statement for the diocesan investigator, then what is she complaining about? Where in her statements is there a description of anything approaching any behaviour that would constitute grounds for a complaint by anyone possessed of the expected adult ability to deal with male and female relationships? What was it about the original 'complaint' in 1999 (looking at her in his tutorial) that appeared to cause her such long-lasting uncomfortable feelings, as she describes them⁴⁵? In her account in her signed statement she seems to have been more concerned about the reactions of some of her class mates – calling her 'teacher's pet' - rather than exhibiting and seeking to overcome the sort of powerlessness that something like an actual assault (such as touching on the breast as was alleged in the Ormond College case) could engender.

after Emma Nicholls tried to initiate what was an unsuccessful 'seduction' of Dr. Dobbs in December 2006, she was sent back to the Dobbs household to try to get more evidence against Dr. Dobbs, using her as a 'staked goat'. At this stage, if not earlier, Yvonne Gunning, Lee Nicholls and even PSU Director Phillip Gerber or one of his staff counsellors were aware not only of Emma's fantasy infatuation with Dr. Dobbs inflamed by her mental problems but also the 'secret' UOW complaints and they were 'orchestrating' Emma's behaviour for this purpose.

⁴³ To borrow terminology from the Director PSU and the diocesan investigator which they apply to Emma Nicholls, the unfortunate 21-year-old woman who suffers from a great many physical and mental problems, details of which are set out in the paper 'A Cautionary Tale' on this website.

⁴⁴ A child under 18; a temporary patient under the Mental Health Act; a person under guardianship per the Guardianship Act; a protected person under the Protected Estates Act; and an incommunicate person, of such mental or physical disability that he or she is unable to receive communications or express his or her will.

⁴⁵ Especially to the extent of wanting in 2005 to destroy his UOW career and in 2007 his whole reputation eight years later.

In fact, she continued in the tutorial to the end of that semester (when she could have requested a change to one conducted by someone else) and she had no contact with Dr. Dobbs after that until two or so years later in a casual meeting among many other people at the UOW doctoral conference.

This was a line of questions that caused Helen Garner much concern when she considered in the Ormond College case that, even where it was alleged that the Master touched each girl on the breast, there was still the issue that these were two Law students, articulate and self-confidant. She quotes an ex-Ormond student: *'The women who brought the complaints are law students. They characterised themselves as helpless. Wait a few years. They'll be screwing companies in court.'*⁴⁶

The question that follows from this is: to what extent is a man to be pilloried for actions that stop far short of unwanted intrusion into a woman's life (such as stalking and harassing) and onto her body (such as continued unwanted deliberate intimate touching)? Is a man to be pilloried even just for being unattractive to a particular woman? To give the previous quote from Corinne's signed statement in full:

*'20. Scott never attempted to touch me in any way or to kiss me. Maybe once or twice he put his hand on my arm if we were in the photocopying room or something. I never saw him behaving inappropriately with other women **but personally I think he's creepy. He has a way about him that would make people feel uncomfortable.** The way he looks at girls. It's just not pleasant at all. When Helen told me about the type of complaint that had been made about him to the Church, it didn't surprise me at all. Not one bit.'*

The Anglican Church in Australia and the Feminist Ideology demonstrated by this complaint.

'Victim feminism' and 'puritan feminism' are the names given to the form of feminism that is described by Helen Garner in the following terms:⁴⁷

'(Puritan feminists) are offended by the suggestion that a woman might learn to handle a trivial sexual approach by herself, without running to Big Daddy and even wreck a man's life, because it unsettles their unstated but crucial belief: that men's sexuality is a monstrous, uncontrollable force, while women are trembling creatures innocent of desire, under siege, even in a room full of companions, forever about to made to feel uncomfortable.'

Helen Garner was speaking of the Ormond College case, where at least the allegations by each young woman included some action that had a sexual basis to it. But in the UOW case there is nothing of that nature at all. There is no touching: *'Scott never attempted to touch me in any way or kiss me'*.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ P132

⁴⁷ Pp209-210

⁴⁸ Par 20.

'*Maybe once or twice*', says Corinne he '*might*' have touched her arm in the photocopying room. Clearly there were other people present there, because she says that she was only ever alone with him for 5 minutes and that was in his office with the door open, and nothing happened that could possibly be regarded as inappropriate or some form of sexual assault.

'He looked at me'

According to Corinne she can feel uncomfortable with a man just looking at her, to the extent that she fantasises upon her interpretation of how he is looking at her without considering for one minute the possibility that her interpretation might be wrong, a figment of her imagination, particularly as it is unsupported by any conversation or other approaches during the period that she was his student⁴⁹. It is interesting to compare her interpretation of being looked at in her two reports, the one in the Record of Interview and the other in her signed statement.

In the Record of Interview it says: '*She was aware that he was singling her out for special attention.*' It does not seem to occur to her that he regarded her as an outstanding student and looked to her to make a good contribution to the discussion. Instead, in her signed statement she says: '*He seemed to favour me in that class. ... but there was never any friendship. I didn't know him apart from that. I had a tutorial with him once a week for a period of about thirteen weeks in 1999. I didn't know him outside that context.*'⁵⁰ Later in her statement she expands on this, in response to insistence from the investigator: '*He used to gaze at me during tutorials, like I'd imagine a teenage boy would look at a girl he was in love with. It was that swooning sort of look. It was strange. I always felt so embarrassed, especially once the others started to notice, so I never answered any questions.*'⁵¹

'He has this way of looking at people. The way he looked at me made me feel strange. Really uncomfortable. It's a female instinct I suppose. It was sort of like, "Ooh, this doesn't feel right."'⁵²

Helen Garner quotes a young woman graduate of Melbourne University then working for an international publishing company:⁵³ '*And it's something to do with being Australian. We don't even seem to like being looked at. We take it badly. But women in other cultures like it. I used to argue for hours with a Frenchman, once, when I was just out of university and still very ideological, about the outrage of being looked at – the male gaze, and so on. But now I'm aware that I can say no. Or yes! – which is so exciting – rather than going "Oh God! He's looking at me!"*'

'He's creepy'

Finally, Corinne Cortese gets to the core and kernel of her complaint: '*... personally I think he's creepy.*'

⁴⁹ According to par.9 of her signed statement made 27 September 2007 she says that the only time she was alone with him was for five minutes in his office with the door open. She has never recorded any face-to-face sexual approaches then or at any other time.

⁵⁰ Par 5 statement dated 27 September 2007

⁵¹ Par 7 emphasis added

⁵² Par 8

⁵³ P.85

There are two extraordinarily disturbing aspects to this. The first is, as it is in the case of Helen Irvine noted before, to find that these women academics fail to apply to a situation outside their work the approach of intellectually rigorous analysis based on verifiable data that they are required to apply to their work. Here, it seems, they take the view that they are entitled to slander a man and take steps to try to anonymously destroy his career on the basis of no evidence, and to disseminate scurrilous gossip on the basis of applying data that is a joke.

Equally disturbing is Corinne's account of the anonymous emails which she attributed to Scott Dobbs without ever considering that she might be the victim of a leg-pull by one of her colleagues (if the emails existed at all, about which I have further to say at the end of the article). By this time, she is aged about 23 or 24, a postgraduate doctoral student who has already worked in the industry for a year before undertaking academic employment. There is the apparent ingenuousness of answering an anonymous email in the first place and embarking on a conversation that apparently went beyond two or three emails. In her statement she says: *'It was like he'd got this fixation (with me) that just escalated in his mind, I guess.'*⁵⁴ She does not seem to have considered the possibility that the fixation was hers and in her mind.

An even more disturbing aspect is this: in Corinne's complaints there is an implicit rejection of a person's right to be creepy. Being creepy is neither a criminal nor civil offence. We live in a democratic society that acknowledges that people have a right to be who they are (gay or lesbian, male, female or transgender, single parent or one of two pairs of parents, pimply, purple-haired, making one woman feel 'uncomfortable', or whatever) without being discriminated against, without having their lives taken or their careers destroyed. This might be said to represent one of the great achievements of the 20th century, marching alongside the feminist push for equal opportunity, equal pay and freedom from oppression and violence for women. Corinne Cortese might well have been glad to take advantage of this when she was seeking to rely on the operation of equal opportunity to study and anti-discrimination to gain employment both in a major private accounting firm and then at University level, but she seems to be peculiarly narrow-minded when she denies this right to another person. Is it that in Corinne's world no-one is allowed to be themselves when that makes her feel 'uncomfortable'?

This feminist 'feeling uncomfortable' has echoes in the struggle against segregation, for the removal of discrimination against African Americans. It is a gender version perhaps. While Martin Luther King Jnr. proclaimed that all people, of whatever skin colour, were equal in God's sight, a lot of 'white' Americans 'felt uncomfortable' about African Americans riding on the same buses, and African American children going to the same school as their 'white' children. They had to 'get over it'. Within the most extreme outrages of the Ku Klux Klan lies this conviction that anyone who made them feel uncomfortable could be discriminated against, killed even.

Helen Garner has some stringent comments on the way in which this word 'uncomfortable' has come to dominate the discourse on sexual harassment and the grave disservice this does. Periodically throughout the book, she refers to cases of violence against women, such as the case of a 14-year-old schoolgirl grabbed while she was walking to school, dragged into a public toilet and raped at knife-point; and the young woman whose step-father sexually abused her between the ages of 10 and 16. There is

⁵⁴ Par 14

the continuing struggle to protect the young girls and to have appropriate sentencing (the step-father served merely 7½ months). There has been the fight to have the Courts recognise that a history of domestic violence and abuse is a proper defense to a charge of murder of the violent spouse or partner.

But just when we see these really serious justice issues for women being addressed and just as better outcomes are within their grasp the cause is hijacked by the petty trivialities of what another feminist writer quoted by Helen Garner calls ‘this narrow punitive business’⁵⁵.

Now the same thing is happening to the serious issues of sexual harassment. Just when we are getting real protection for women at risk – think here of the teenage girl in her first job being pressured into providing sexual services for her boss – the fight has been hijacked by these women who fear that they may be made to feel ‘uncomfortable’. Who the hell do they think they are?

Helen Garner says this about puritan or victim feminism:⁵⁶

‘But I know that between ‘being made to feel uncomfortable’ and ‘violence against women’ lies a vast range of male and female behaviours. If we deny this we enfeeble language and drain it of its meaning. We insult the suffering of women who have met real violence and we distort the subtleties of human interactions that can only serve as propaganda for war.’

What is so distressing about the ‘mingy, whining, cringing terror of sex’ as Helen Garner describes this form of feminism as it manifested itself in the Ormond College case in 1991⁵⁷ is that apparently it is still alive and flourishing: in 1999, when Corinne Cortese, aged 21, entered the tutorial room for each of 13 weeks of semester to find that her tutor looked at her and some of her classmates teased her as ‘teacher’s pet’; and still again in 2002, when, aged 23 or 24 one day she saw him across a crowded lunch table and lecture hall and their eyes met (*who looked first?*); and when two weeks later she replied to an anonymous email (with the highly suspicious name ‘write to me if your lucky’ which an intelligent internet user would have sent straight to spam), apparently signed by ‘a secret admirer’ and engaged for a short time in an exchange of emails with someone who later signed off ‘Scottie’ (*who could be anyone, male or female*). On the basis only of this slender evidence (*if indeed it could be dignified by such a description*) of what? – admiration for her looks and her brain perhaps - Corinne Cortese apparently has kept alive the fanatical flame of resentment of ‘being made to feel uncomfortable’ so that, firstly, at age 27 she has put herself forward to try, knowingly behind his back, to destroy Dr. Dobbs’ chances of gaining tenure⁵⁸ and then again, at age 29 to try to destroy his reputation in his church and his marriage and family life.

Is this the work of a woman scorned, perhaps, or just one with an eye for the main chance?

⁵⁵ P196

⁵⁶ P221

⁵⁷ P193

⁵⁸ And it is irrelevant whether this was a factor in the rejection of his application. What is relevant is that she wanted to do this, and she wanted the Record of Interview handed to Professor Patterson, the Chair of the Committee considering tenure applications, having indicated that she would not work at UOW if he remained in the Faculty. She discloses in her interview with the investigator that she needs to do so because her mother is ill, which prompted her to return to UOW from her academic position at Macquarie University in Sydney.

And in this endeavour she has received active encouragement from two women, both of them her PhD supervisors. The first is Mary Kaidonis, with whose husband Dr. Dobbs had some issues at the University because of the culture of bribery and soft marking which could destroy the integrity of the Faculty's courses, who takes Corinne Cortese to the meeting with Robyn Weekes of the EEDU by which it is intended to destroy his academic career. The second is that very person who, by virtue of her special position of power and trust in the Figtree parish is accorded respect and whose statements are automatically and uncritically believed by the parishioners, Helen Irvine, the wife of the then Senior Minister of Figtree parish, Rod Irvine.

There are some frightening similarities (and dissimilarities) between the Ormond College case and the UOW case.

The first similarity is the matter of the delay in making a complaint. In the Ormond College case the delay was 'explained' by the need to complete exams. The explanation is not convincing. The exams were finished in November to early December. College staff was still on-campus or otherwise accessible. In the following 2-3 months of the long vacation the student called Nicole worked at the College and approached the Master for a reference. She said nothing about her complaint. Likewise, the student called Elizabeth did nothing during all this time. It was not until they and their group of feminist supporters returned to academic life the following year that the complaints were aired. An anonymous pamphlet was circulated in the College in March. The Board of the College was not allowed to take steps to deal appropriately with the complaints in-house. Once this path was entered upon, the whole relentless downward spiral from College processes to Police Charges and Court hearings was set. As Helen Garner says: if only all their feminist supporters had been on sabbatical that semester,⁵⁹ what a difference that might have made.

For Corinne Cortese the delay is even greater, not just a matter of a few months but a matter of many years. One wonders whether she really had any thought of making any complaint until pressed by others, which in itself is another frightening similarity with the Ormond College case.⁶⁰

But with this dissimilarity: where with the support of the feminists of the College and the university Elizabeth and Nicole came to exhibit also those extremes of feminist fanaticism in their inability to be satisfied with any action that was taken, refusing to accept the Court decisions but keeping on pushing relentlessly, Corinne Cortese does not quite fit that mould. Is the proper interpretation of her very belated actions this: that she was simply playing ball with the two senior women of the Faculty in order to further her career, and therefore she was acting simply from 'political' motives and allowing herself to be used to further the agendas of these two women? Around 2005 there were rumours and undercover journalistic investigations of allegations of corruption in the Faculty

⁵⁹ At p222.

⁶⁰ This behaviour is repeated in the 'complaint' brought to FAC by Emma Nicholls' mother, Lee: Emma Nicholls had no wish to make a complaint against Dr. Dobbs. She was forced to sign a statement only after the parish leadership, including Yvonne Gunning had adopted Lee Nicholls' allegations on behalf of her daughter and spread details to parish staff, wardens and members of the parish council. Yvonne Gunning and Lee Nicholls then had to work very hard to force Emma to cooperate after they realised that nothing could be done unless Emma made the statement. She never did make a formal complaint.

in relation to the alteration of the exam results of overseas students to enable them to pass a subject. This, had it blown open would have involved the two Faculty women (and Mary Kaidonis' husband) in any investigation along with everyone else.⁶¹

But Corinne Cortese's real motivation is a matter of speculation. The account she gives of herself is consistent with victim feminism discussed above, no matter how unlikely a 'victim' she would appear to be. *(When I wrote this in 2008 I did not have access to the transcripts of the interviews, after which I spent some time in thought about what I had been reading. I now think that her motivation and that of Helen Irvine are very clear in pursuing Dr. Dobbs for personal gain – Corinne Cortese for a Lecturer's position at UOW and Helen Irvine, to try to prop up the failing 'case' of Emma Nicholls and to protect her husband, among others in FAC from possible court proceedings by Dr. Dobbs).*

And another dissimilarity is this: in the Ormond college case, at least the complaints of the two students were of *objective* matters: *'he touched my breast'*. The Courts were asked to make an assessment of the veracity of the witnesses in order to make a finding in respect of something tangible that could or could not be proved to the satisfaction of the Court. Evidence could be and was given for and against the allegation and the Court was able to make a decision, in this case against the evidence of the two women (one in the first trial and the second by the court on appeal).

But in Corinne's case, (and even more so in the case of Anika Rose) the allegations are *subjective*: *'he looked at me,' 'I thought he was creepy,' 'He has a way about him that would make people feel uncomfortable'.* *'The way he looks at girls, it's just not pleasant at all,'* and so forth. There is nothing here that admits of being able to be proved by objective evidence that can be tested and weighed by a Court or quasi-judicial body. These allegations have no tangible existence outside the mind of the person making them.⁶² Giving any credence to such allegations is a trend to be strongly resisted, and the Anglican Church of Australia should be very careful about lending the weight of its organisation to support such unsound material. Perhaps, at the very least, those who make such statements should be psychiatrically assessed as to the 'reliability' of their fantasies before being accorded any attention.

Helen Garner says of victim feminism: *'..... in its disingenuousness it weakens me and makes me ashamed to call myself a feminist.'*⁶³

I'm with Helen Garner on this. It makes me ashamed to be a feminist too. And also, to the extent that this form of feminism would appear to be espoused by several directors of the PSU in Sydney diocese and other diocese and protected by legislation of the Anglican Church in Australia, it makes me ashamed to be an Anglican.

⁶¹ Which is not to suggest that any of them would have been found to have engaged in this unethical behaviour. But this raises the question of why the Anglican Church in Australia would set itself up to enforce a possible cover-up of allegations of corruption in the Faculty if this proves to be the true picture behind these belated and trivial complaints of Corinne Cortese and the actions of these women in relation to them.

⁶² In this there is a frightening similarity with the allegations used in the notorious witchcraft trials of Salem: in those cases, evidence by witness X that they had had a dream in which the accused person had come and engaged them in 'witchcraft' activities was accepted as evidence that this had in fact happened.

⁶³ P. 210

Reflections in 2018.

Now, all these ‘warning signs’ of the collapse of a whole set of Christian-based principles have come home to roost. These are principles that underlie the system that supports democratic process - truth-telling, personal responsibility, fair process and objective evidence as the only way to assess allegations and punish transgressions, and the imperative that no-one can be punished for transgressing an unwritten ‘law’ not even guessed at - these have been trampled on by so-called ‘progressives’ who elevate in their stead subjective or irrational ‘hurt’ or ‘offence’, a celebration of victim-hood, abandonment of the rule of law and the principles of natural justice, especially when the alleged crime involves child abuse or some other ‘heinous’ allegation, elevating these principles at the expense of truth and justice. These principles of the new age undermine the secular democratic sphere and have no place at all in the Christian sphere.

Because no-one at the time – 1991 - called out the basic injustices heaped on the unfortunate Master of Ormond College and his wife and family by the pretensions of these two women students, whose stories were rejected by the secular magistrate and judge,⁶⁴ and took steps to push back against the fundamental dishonesty of such an ideology as victim feminism, we have in 2018 the spread of this infection throughout our tertiary institutions and other workplaces and the media and into Christian organisations themselves, with increased power.

What we have now is a spurious secular morality that is, in many respects, as corrosive and authoritarian as that promoted by the most fundamentalist adherents of a Christian cult, and which in Australia is applied by the ‘righteous few’ AKA the ‘left-wing progressives’ against the unenlightened many. And it appears in the Discipline Ordinance 2006 Sydney diocese (and other Anglican diocese) and the way it has been administered by successive directors PSU in that diocese as well as by others such as Yvonne Gunning and the rev Peter Barnett⁶⁵ as well as similar church legislation in other diocese and other denominations of the Christian church. This is a secular morality that is merciless, ruthless, lacking compassionate and administered in violation of the principles of natural justice and the rules of judicial process that keep the people safe from arbitrary punishment. In other words, it is the antithesis of democratic principles and Christianity. It is, instead, the manifestation of all forms of tyranny, whether characterised by the label ‘left’ (for socialist and communist ideologies) or ‘right’ (for Nazi and similar ideologies).

Helen Garner warned against it in relation to feminism in 1999.

None of these ideologies have any place in a Christian church organization’s legislation or administration. These are the times when the Christian church has lost authority and credibility. The good news of God’s saving grace through the life and death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (the church’s core business) has been tarnished and rejected by so many people not just because of the revelations of systemic child abuse within the church and its’ organisations but also because of the

⁶⁴ Excepting, of course, Helen Garner in 1995.

⁶⁵ Yvonne Gunning’s behaviour is chronicled in *A Cautionary Tale* and *The Evolution of a Lie* on my website. The rev. Peter Barnett’s behaviour in the Drew and Pippa case is also chronicled on my website, www.churchdispute.com

determined and dishonest efforts of senior clergy to hide and cover-up cases, as if above the law. A sorry parade of senior clergy has had to hang its' collective heads in shame in the proceedings of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Abuse (2017-2018), because truth and justice was rejected in the past, and now, when truth and justice are being rejected by the Commissioners by accepting mere allegations as worthy to receive financial compensation, the church leaders are unable to reject this and insist on due process.

Hand-in-hand with the child abuse scandals there runs rampant the 'diseased feminism' I have discussed in this article, evidence of further rotteness within the Christian church, its' legislation and the manner of its' administration.

I warned against it in 2008 with the original article, and even earlier, when, calling for the design of successive Discipline Ordinances and the operations of the PSU under the directorship of Phillip Gerber to be pulled into line with the Christian-based principles of natural justice, truth and fair process, I was considering another case that he so tragically mismanaged⁶⁶.

No-one acted. No-one cared about the damage being inflicted on ordinary and, even more importantly, innocent people and their families. No-one cared about the reputational damage to the Christian church. No-one cared about how the Christian church has betrayed so many people and destroyed or damaged their faith. From the behaviour of many (but by no means all) senior people of the clergy and administration of the organizational church, it appears that only God cares about this. How His views will play out in the future of the organizational church as presently constituted cannot be anticipated, but can only be awaited, preferably in a spirit of repentance.



⁶⁶ John's Story.