



Source: Michael Gawenda, 'US can't justify killings, says Iraqi PM', *Sydney Morning Herald online*, 01/06/06.
Tags: [sound](#), [architecture](#), [violence](#), [world events](#)
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At the intersection of fear water spirals upwards like architecture. The sudden storm sets off the machine from whose mouth a thousand pages leap onto the Smiley Face on Crater Galle—recently discovered by scientists studying Mars. In living rooms on couches hands hold remotes clicking on to moon sniffers behind plasma walls above increasing attacks on humans by animals below the official opening of the knife that searches under the glass ribs of the Berlin Bahnhof, stopping the train.

That was the week that was.

Out of touch with my friend in Hamburg, I emailed, wondering if she'd joined the 'Robin Hood' gang operating there: stealing luxury items such as Australian wagyu beef and giving them to interns, low paid workers and welfare recipients. She emailed back from Sao Paulo. Police there have shot 107 people in a week, especially if they 'looked like criminals'.

Then my sister-in-law wrote from Shanghai. She'd been to Tibet where, she said, 'the air was dizzyingly thin'.

I spent the week picking up books at random, remotely focussed.

'Frocks of the week at the Teddy Bear Ball—Shock of the Week—forget that hideous dress.' *New Zealand Women's Weekly*.

'Going to the North Pole? Then take Miro with you. 'It seems to me I've known you all my life.' The war. Unknown paintings. A night spent in laughter: omelet that fell on the floor.' John Cage.

'Camilla was the favourite of Diana. Camilla's history had been singular from the beginning. She had been tied to a spear as an infant and thrown across the river by her father in a dedication to Diana. He swam across and brought her up in tiger skins. Many mothers sought her for a daughter-in-law, but she continued faithful to Diana and repelled the thought of marriage. It seemed as if she might run over the standing corn without crushing it, or over the surface of the water without dipping her feet.' Bullfinch's *Mythology*.

Quoting didn't make me feel blessed.

But there was a pattern in all this, I thought, where Dr Kringelbach's Happiness Formula must fit in. Where bliss must connect the Pope visiting Auschwitz with the weeping figs of Sydney and their poisoners, with the fixed

smiles of Royals, with the Western Australian petrochemical plant destroying the 300,000 petroglyphs near Puratha—sad place—with the Intercessors 'praying geographically': '...because Sydney is a natural reflection of the beauty of God's heaven. God's redemptive purpose for Sydney is for it to be a haven for all the people of the world...'

In this book *Australian Apocalypse* by Robert Bednarik I looked at the pictures. Scraped onto dark dolerite rocks on the pink shores of Puratha the negative patinas looked like knitting patterns for jumpers. 'Interpretation always reflects the viewer's culture and perception', says the text.

Dugongs, crabs, turtles, wader birds, emus, whale fins, faces. Marching around a shoulder or up an arm. A ship. For the back of a giant's cardigan.

...Guenever, the daughter of Hoedegan the giant. Bad when little, worse when great...

When I was little I dropped stitches left and right. I dreamed of being an architect. I dreamed of building buildings on the moon. This was before any man had got there. My moon buildings would sparkle, then go dark as they faced the other side. I would imagine my children, many children, living there. But I couldn't imagine what they would do all night. Actually, I wasn't remotely interested. I was only interested in the shapes I could make and the sounds you might hear on the moon.

The other day I went for a hearing test. In front of me was a famous war artist. I entered the sound proof room in which he had so recently sat and put on earphones to listen to sonic notes: from Levin, London, Sao Paulo, Shanghai, the field of Mars, from planets not yet named.

I didn't hear anything from the moon but from a remote region of Australia I heard a faint cry. The operator said no, you did not hear that. The chart the operator filled in looked like a knitting pattern. It recorded only a slight hearing loss.

My friend said in her email that she had gone off the pill and become 'a phantom'. I gave up knitting altogether—I could never knit baby clothes—the white wool would get grubby in one minute flat. I would have preferred to knit Smiley Faces on Mars.

Adapted for performance by Barbara Campbell from a story by Loma Bridge.