

Catholic Action, Sydney Style: Catholic lay organisations from friendly societies to the Vice Squad

JAMES FRANKLIN

The mid-20th century was the high point of lay Catholic societies in Australia. The best known are those associated with B. A. Santamaria and based in Melbourne, the Champion Society and the anti-communist 'Movement' with its various associated bodies such as the National Catholic Rural Movement. The wide array of mass lay organisations in New South Wales is much less known, but in their time they had a huge membership and influence.

It is often said that Catholic Action in Sydney lacked the vigour of the Melbourne organisations, and that 'Catholic Action in Sydney remained diffuse and uncoordinated'¹ and stunted by its strict clerical control. That judgment may be strictly true, but behind the scenes a remarkably effective collection of interconnected organisations was coming into existence. When the Victorian Movement's independence as a vast organisation out of external control led to disaster in the Labor Split of 1955, the close clerical connections of Sydney Catholic Action meant it survived, as did its ally, the Catholic-dominated government of J. J. Cahill (premier 1952-59). As David Hilliard puts it,

Sydney Catholicism had its own distinctive style: pragmatic, unintellectual, ultramontane in piety, closely linked to the Labor Party, which had ruled in New South Wales since 1941. The Catholic community, with its own system of primary and secondary schools, was reinforced by scores of pious societies, social and sporting clubs, and guilds for Catholics in particular professions and occupations. During the 1950s Sydney's Catholic subculture expanded rather than dwindled and new societies were formed ...²

Michael Hogan writes similarly,

It is the reinforcing coincidence of political styles which has led both Church and party leaders to be pragmatic, bureaucratic and moderate. This can be contrasted with the situation in Victoria where completely different styles in the Church and in the party have reinforced both in a confrontational, radical (left and right), separatist mould of symbolic politics.³

The Sydney style was less confrontational and ideological than Melbourne's, more pragmatic (but not aimless or lacking in coherent goals) and reliant on quiet backroom negotiations. Not coincidentally, it was more successful in achieving its aims.

Part I: Organised Catholic laity in Sydney, 1900-1960

Benefit societies and sodalities

In common with the Church in many European and colonial countries,⁴ the Australian Catholic Church in the late 19th century and early 20th century saw an extraordinary flourishing of lay societies designed to create a complete Catholic culture covering all aspects of life.

Those associations built on an older tradition. In 1845 Archbishop Polding founded the Australasian (later Australian) Holy Catholic (AHC) Guild. It operated mainly as a friendly society; that is, in return for regular contributions from working men it provided sick pay, medical and pharmaceutical benefits and funeral benefits. It competed with the Victorian-based Hibernian Australasian Catholic Benefit Society, which Polding considered too Irish.⁵

In the decades before state social security, such 'friendly societies' played a crucial role in enabling working people to survive health disasters. The societies, including non-Catholic ones such as the Oddfellows, also had a spiritual and social aspect.⁶ The reach and importance of the many branches of those societies can be seen in a long account of the annual communion breakfast of the Australian Holy Catholic Guild in Boorowa in 1907, which had 49 members and a credit of £772. (It was attended by representatives of the opposition, the Oddfellows.)⁷ Friendly societies survived into the later 20th century, but became less relevant with better state social security and private health insurance.

From the late 19th century there was a strong tradition of parish-based sodalities such as the Holy Name Society, Children of Mary for purely spiritual purposes,⁸ the St Vincent de Paul Society for charitable work,⁹ and the Catholic Youth Organisation (CYO) for a combination of spiritual and social purposes.¹⁰ Every age group above the age of reason was catered for, with older infants enrolled in the Holy Angels Sodality.¹¹ Even small and remote parishes usually had a range of active sodalities. In its centenary year, 1952, the parish of Mudgee had an AHC Guild, St Vincent de Paul Society, Children of Mary, a school Parents and Friends Association, Holy Name Society, Sacred Heart Sodality, Catholic Women's Club, Legion of Mary, Sewing Guild, Altar Society, the People's Eucharistic League and the CYO.¹² All from a Catholic population of around 1500.¹³

The Catholic organised laity were on show in their thousands at the International Eucharistic Congress in Sydney in 1928.¹⁴ In 1934, a series of impressive photos were taken by the celebrated press photographers Sam and Ted Hood at the annual Corpus Christi procession at St Patrick's College Manly.



Corpus Christi Procession, St Patrick's College Manly, 3 June 1934. (Photographer Ted Hood, State Library of New South Wales, <https://collection.sl.nsw.gov.au/record/94R7m001>)



Members of the Holy Angels Sodality, Corpus Christi, St Patrick's College, 7 June 1934. (Photographer Ted Hood, State Library of New South Wales, <https://collection.sl.nsw.gov.au/record/npA2Gol1>)

Some organisations existed for more than purely spiritual and charitable purposes. A major attempt at a Catholic political party around 1920, the Catholic Federation, was unsuccessful.¹⁵ Action moved behind the scenes. The Knights of the Southern Cross – by the 1930s ‘by far the most powerful and cohesive lay organisation in New South Wales’, according to Patrick O’Farrell¹⁶ – was formed largely to combat employment discrimination against Catholics. As a Catholic counterpart and rival to the Freemasons, it put pressure on anti-Catholic employers as well as acting as an employment agency for young Catholic men in need of a job.¹⁷ Large Catholic clubs in the city and suburbs had little spiritual activity and resembled typical sporting, social and gambling clubs such as leagues clubs, but had the effect of segregating Catholics from mainstream society.¹⁸

Dr P. J. Ryan MSC – a philosophy lecturer who was to become the intellectual leader of Catholic Action in Sydney and a prominent anti-communist speaker and organiser¹⁹ – criticised the laity as the ‘church dormant’ and organised some to teach Catholic children in state schools from 1932.²⁰ Also established with the aim of evangelisation was the Catholic Evidence Guild, brought from London by Frank Sheed in 1925 to train speakers in debating opponents in the Domain.²¹ A Catholic Debating Society trained members in spoken argument.²²

Women’s groups included the Catholic Women’s Social Guild and the Catholic Women’s Association,²³ while an umbrella Legion of Catholic Women was formed in 1941.²⁴ The more independent women’s movement, The Grail, evoked less clerical enthusiasm and in the 1950s found itself in a chilly relationship with Cardinal Norman Gilroy.²⁵

Between the wars and especially in the 1930s, a huge range of specialist lay groups were founded, mainly on clerical initiative, wherever a critical mass of Catholics with some special interest could be found. The Catholic Boy Scouts Movement, affiliated with but separate from the Boy Scouts, ensured that Catholic youth were not influenced by what some considered ‘Masons in shorts’ with their semi-pantheist ideology.²⁶ Five hundred marched in 1941.²⁷

A Catholic Bushwalking Club was formed in 1943 (and still exists).²⁸ Central coordination of these groups increased with the appointment of Fr A. R. E. Thomas (later Bishop of Bathurst) as Director of Catholic Action in 1940.²⁹ It was his role to rule on such contentious questions as whether the Bushwalking Club could conduct mixed camping trips. (The answer was no; and furthermore that was not to be written in the constitution or rules.)³⁰

These Sydney groups did not see the split, visible in Melbourne and Adelaide, between sodalities devoted to personal spirituality and groups of intellectuals discussing *Rerum Novarum*, Chesterton and Belloc³¹ (except for a very small Sydney Champion Society). Sydney did not produce a theoretical organ like the Melbourne *Catholic Worker* (instead hosting the clerically oriented *Australasian*



Catholic Boy Scouts, Corpus Christi, St Patrick's College Manly, 7 June 1934. (Photographer Ted Hood, State Library of New South Wales, <https://collection.sl.nsw.gov.au/record/nM7BVKKY>)

Catholic Record). The practical Sydney style was more devoted to rolling the Masons and stacking Labor and union branches.

That raises the complex question of the extent to which the New South Wales ALP was itself a Catholic-dominated organisation. It cannot be said that the party was 'taken over' by a Catholic bloc, in the sense that Santamaria aimed to take over the federal ALP in the early 1950s in order to implement his vision of Catholic social policy.³² That is clear from the failure of New South Wales Labor governments to deliver state aid for church schools – that was impossible because Federal Labor feared a backlash from any state aid policy, both internally in the party and from the electorate. However, in the relevant period about half of New South Wales Labor parliamentarians were Catholic,³³ and at the local level the large overlap between Catholic and ALP networks is undeniable. Cahill's biographer writes:

In those days [the 1920s] Marrickville was very Irish-Catholic and very Labor, some said it was an Irish-Catholic-Labor ghetto of which St Brigid's was the epicentre. The 9 o'clock Mass every Sunday was the politicians' Mass. Afterwards, local members and hopefuls and union bosses would gather near the steps to be seen and to trade gossip and caucus and maybe assassinate a few reputations.

It is relevant for me to recall here the story told of a little old lady who, arriving late for a Marrickville Labor branch meeting, genuflected as she entered the hall, causing the meeting to erupt into a gale of laughter. 'They're all the same faces,' the poor flustered woman protested. And it was true. Most of the people attending branch meetings could be seen also at St Brigid's on Sundays, often taking up the plate or with the Holy Name sodality. Joe Cahill was always among them.³⁴



J. J. Cahill in his office as Premier of New South Wales, 1956: a central player in the 'Irish-Catholic-Labor ghetto' of Marrickville. (Source: National Archives of Australia, series A1200, L21842, item 765447)

It is those long and close connections in personnel that make the history of Catholic organisation relevant to explaining state government policy in the 1950s. The parish-based nature of the anti-communist Movement³⁵ is just one instance of how pre-existing Catholic organisational structures could be used for new purposes.

Professional and workers guilds 1930s-50s: blue- and white-collar

This article will concentrate especially on the industry-specific guilds formed from the mid-1930s to encourage Catholics in particular industries to form a community, for their spiritual benefit and as a help in evangelising their workplaces. In most industries, there was no definite Catholic perspective on the work being done, but in a few important cases there was. The non-controversial cases will be surveyed first.

Most of the information that survives comes from reports of the main spiritual activity of each guild, its annual communion breakfast. Members would attend mass

and receive holy communion together and afterwards gather for a meal and an address by a bishop or other church dignitary. A common theme was the need to act ethically in professional life. The speeches are not always platitudinous and can sometimes reveal the hopes of the hierarchy for Catholic Action.

Some successful guilds were for blue-collar workers. Three hundred railway and tramway employees attended a communion breakfast in 1937 to found a Transport Guild.³⁶ In 1938, 700 members attended and a principal activity was the awarding of bursaries for members' children to complete school. At the annual breakfast of 1947, at the height of industrial unrest, Cardinal Gilroy attacked communism and urged fighting it.³⁷ In 1952, 420 attended the 16th annual breakfast, where Gilroy said, 'Individually each one should take a pride in his work. Whether you drive a pen or an engine, whether you build a carriage or clean it, do every phase of your work to the best of your ability.'³⁸ There were branches in Goulburn³⁹ and Newcastle.⁴⁰ The taxi drivers' Guild of St Christopher and St Anthony devised a taxi-blessing ceremony 'similar to that enacted when fishing fleets put to sea.'⁴¹

Guilds were formed in many white-collar industries. The Postmaster-General's Mission Guild attracted 500 to its Communion Breakfast of 1939.⁴² A Stamp Duties Guild is mentioned in 1940.⁴³ The Catholic Insurance Guild of St Anthony held a



Leading the fight against communism, birth control and Freemasons: Cardinal Norman Gilroy, 1950. (Source: Evening Post Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, NZ; <https://tiaki.natlib.govt.nz/#details=ecatalogue.455092>)

ball in 1954 attended by 400.⁴⁴ The Catholic Bankers Guild of St Matthew was formed in 1946;⁴⁵ H. C. Coombs spoke to 430 at its 1950 gathering.⁴⁶ Cardinal Gilroy addressed 450 members at the 1951 breakfast, reminding them that ‘attachment to money ... never brings real happiness’, but agreeing that, ‘Banks today are far removed from the money-changer or money-lender mentioned in Scripture.’⁴⁷ Six hundred attended mass in 1954.⁴⁸

Other white-collar guilds were the Qualified Accountants and Secretaries’ Catholic Guild of St Vincent de Paul,⁴⁹ the Journalists’ Guild of St Francis de Sales, the Catholic Radio Guild of St John Chrysostom,⁵⁰ and the Assisian Guild of Catholic Teachers (that is, teachers in state schools), which numbered 125 in 1940.⁵¹ At its breakfast in 1946, members were urged to confront communist control of the Teachers Federation.⁵² (Where possible the founders of the guilds tried to name them after an appropriate saint: thus the Postal Guild of St Gabriel because the Angel Gabriel was a messenger and the Dentists Guild of St Apollonia, called after an early Alexandrian martyr whose tortures included having her teeth pulled out.)⁵³

One of the longest-lived and most successful professional guilds was the St Thomas More Society for lawyers. It was founded in 1945 ‘to spread the knowledge of the principles of Christian ethics and morality in relation to the profession of the law’⁵⁴ – 110 attended its Red Mass in 1954.⁵⁵ The society published a journal up to 1988 and remained active for decades, including awarding a Thomas More scholarship.⁵⁶ It still exists and holds an annual Red Mass.⁵⁷ Catholic-inspired natural law principles of legal philosophy had an impact in changing the law, notably in the Mabo case.⁵⁸

There was no need for a guild of academics, as the number of Catholics employed by universities was negligible. However there was a Newman Society (of students) at Sydney University⁵⁹ and a University Catholic Federation of Australia in which Rosemary Goldie was prominent,⁶⁰ and a Newman Graduate Association active from 1944.⁶¹ Its journal *Manna*, edited mostly by Patrick O’Farrell, sustained a high intellectual level around the early 1960s.⁶²

A Catholic Soldiers’ Guild achieved official recognition by the Minister for the Army in 1940.⁶³

The Australian Catholic Historical Society, founded in 1940,⁶⁴ remains among the most active of the mid-century Catholic organisations.

Professional guilds at the moral cutting edge: medicine and pharmacy

Catholic ethical views on ‘life’ issues like eugenics, contraception, abortion and euthanasia differed from the mainstream, then as now. Catholic members of the medical and pharmaceutical professions therefore saw a need to gather together to support one another and to put their point of view both within and beyond their professions.

The Medical Guild of St Luke was formed 1934, ‘aimed at the efficient organisation of the Catholic medical profession; to strengthen their faith; to educate

in medical matters involving the Church's teaching; to encourage, help and advise senior students; to cooperate for common spiritual and material good for the welfare of the nation and the glory of the Church'.⁶⁵ It emphasised the need for doctors to follow moral law especially when the general opinion of the medical profession might be against it.⁶⁶ It published a journal for many years, up to about 1970.⁶⁷ A Junior Guild of St Luke was formed to support medical students.⁶⁸

St Anne's Catholic Nurses Guild was formed in 1939 by the Women's Group of Catholic Action,⁶⁹ and later extended to Canberra and Broken Hill.⁷⁰

Pharmacy was very much at the cutting edge, since Catholic opposition to contraception was opposed to normal practice in the profession.⁷¹ Catholic pronatalism also opposed the body of opinion represented by the Family Planning Association of Australia (still called, up to 1960, the Racial Hygiene Association).⁷² The Catholic Pharmacists Guild of St Francis Xavier was founded in 1935 'to purge the chemists' business of all unclean dealings and of all practices contrary to the laws of Catholic morality'.⁷³ It soon produced a guidebook on 'Moral problems of Catholic chemists'.⁷⁴

In a speech at the communion breakfast of 1953, Gilroy told them, 'Your guild asks more of its members than any other,' referring to the loss of business sustained by pharmacists refusing to stock contraceptives. In reply, pharmacist Nelson Johns said that Catholic pharmacists, in opposing birth control, were engaged in a battle against 'a greater evil than communism – an evil which cheats God of His greatest power, the power of creating souls'.⁷⁵ The next year, Bishop Lyons said, 'Anyone who deliberately and directly prevents or destroys life is guilty of a grave sin.'⁷⁶ It is stretching Catholic orthodoxy to equate preventing life with taking it, but these remarks show the depth of opposition to contraception in the leadup to the papal reaffirmation of the ban on contraception in the 1968 encyclical *Humanae Vitae*.

In the health professions, Catholics remained in a minority and there was no question of their views on morality becoming legislated (unlike in Ireland, where the sale of contraceptives was illegal). But in one other profession, Catholics did capture governmental policy.

The Police Guild of St Christopher

Catholic police founded their Guild of St Christopher in 1934, with 120 present.⁷⁷ At the 1939 breakfast, the philosopher Dr Ryan said, 'As Catholics, they realised the divine origin of all law and that its continuity came from Catholicism ... By what law could they better be guided in doing their duty than that of God, Who was the source of all authority?' A friendly message was received from the Police Commissioner, Bill McKay, a Freemason, and he was praised for creating a Christian force.⁷⁸ Two hundred members of the Guild escorted Archbishop Kelly's funeral in 1940.⁷⁹

Gilroy's speech at the 1940 breakfast declared them 'perhaps the most physically perfect body of men in the whole city', the sight of which would give a salutary lesson to 'those larrikins who hang round street corners and who declare that religion is all right for women and old folk'. Like the communists, Catholic men should seek to 'indoctrinate others in the principles of their faith'. The men of the Guild will not imitate those of a certain association in the force 'that is formed simply to push forward members, independent of their worthiness for that office'.⁸⁰ His audience knew he meant the Freemasons. (The Colonial Police Act 1850 had required police to swear not to belong to 'any secret society whatsoever unless to the Society of Freemasons'⁸¹ and Masonic domination of the force from the commissioner down was well-known.)

At the 1944 breakfast Gilroy attacked communism and the press duped by them.⁸² At the 1948 breakfast, attended by 500 including three policewomen, he urged them to 'respect the human dignity of the wrong-doer'; 'no matter what may be the crime of which a person seemed to be guilty, there should be respect for human personality'. The police must respect the law themselves.⁸³

The 1952 breakfast, again attended by 500, had something to celebrate. The Freemasons were outfoxed and a foundation member of the Guild, Colin Delaney, was congratulated on becoming the first Catholic Commissioner of Police.⁸⁴ A classic Sydney rumour is that there was an arrangement that Masonic and Catholic police commissioners alternated. An approximate alternation is observable, but the existence of an 'arrangement' is unclear. The affiliations of commissioners are listed in Table 1:

Table 1. NSW Police Commissioners⁸⁵

William McKay	1935-48	Mason
Fred Scott	1948-52	Mason
Colin Delaney	1952-62	Catholic
Norman Allan	1962-72	Mason
Fred Hanson	1972-76	Catholic
Merv Wood	1977-79	Mason
Jim Lees	1979-81	Mason
Cec Abbott	1981-84	Catholic

Part II: The Cahill Government's moral agenda

The police service was far from the only branch of government under Catholic control or at least strong influence. For some years from 1952, the Premier, Police Commissioner, Attorney-General, and Lord Mayor of Sydney were Catholic. Michael Hogan notes that in 1954 the departments of Public Works, Attorney-

General, Justice, Police and the Housing Commission had Catholics both as their respective responsible ministers and permanent heads.⁸⁶ Equally important was the consummate skill behind the scenes of Bishop, later Archbishop, James Carroll, who handled negotiations with politicians for the Cardinal.⁸⁷ At the same time the Cahill government was gifted with a weak parliamentary opposition. Some vertical integration of legislative and police policy became possible, based on shared assumptions.

An early example, implemented when Labor gained control of both houses of parliament, was the abolition of the death penalty. Whereas Victoria conducted executions up to 1967, none occurred in New South Wales after 1939 and in 1955 the death penalty was abolished, except for very rare crimes like treason. Attorney-General Bill Sheahan argued that the risk of hanging an innocent was unacceptable.⁸⁸

Catholic theory and practice on the confessional state and morals legislation

Before addressing the legislative policy on morals of the Cahill government and its implementation by the Vice Squad, it is useful to survey briefly some background issues of Catholic theory and its relation to the social mores of the 1950s.

First, the decade was, as everyone agrees, morally conservative, worried about moral decay, and in favour of state interventions. It was the decade of the ‘Call to Australia’ by leading citizens hoping for a ‘restoring of the moral order’;⁸⁹ Fr Peyton’s Family Rosary Crusade⁹⁰ and the Billy Graham Crusade; White Australia and government assistance for the integration of ‘New Australians’; fears of communism and juvenile delinquency; and the widespread institutionalisation and forced adoption of children. The heightened expectations of paternalist state action were also seen in positive policies like baby health centres, child endowment, mass polio vaccination, free and compulsory school milk and slum clearance. From later ideological perspectives, the combination of conservative values and large-scale government planning informed by what was taken to be science may look incongruous, but it was characteristic of the 1950s in many Western countries.

Second, Catholic doctrine up to the 1965 Vatican II declaration on religious freedom, *Dignitatis humanae*, favoured a close connection between church and state, ideally a confessional state which granted special privileges and support to the Catholic Church. That doctrine was naturally soft-pedalled in Anglophone countries with a tradition of liberal democratic polities involving separation of church and state;⁹¹ indeed, it was Anglophone writers who were largely responsible for the change of doctrine towards freedom of conscience, such as the American John Courtney Murray and the Australian Eric D’Arcy.⁹² Nevertheless in principle Catholic leaders in Australia remained supportive of government action in the interests of what they took to be the common good, such as increasing the birth rate and immigration and legislating on ‘morals’.⁹³

Third, Catholic doctrines on sexual morality were especially severe. Many ex-Catholic schoolchildren have complained in their memoirs of Catholic ‘sexual repression’, but we can go to the source by looking at the Australian Catholic Truth Society (ACTS) pamphlet ‘Can I keep pure?’ by the Irish Jesuit Fr Robert Nash. An ACTS pamphlet was both officially approved and intended for wide distribution among the laity.⁹⁴ Fr Nash emphasises the seriousness of sins concerning sex: they are all mortal sins:

Deliberately to seek the pleasure accompanying that power outside of marriage, even in the smallest degree, whether when alone or with others, is a mortal sin against God’s law. And, even in marriage, it is a mortal sin to seek the pleasure in a manner devised to frustrate God’s design in instituting marriage.

A sin’s being mortal means it is serious enough to merit eternal hellfire, if it is indulged in with full knowledge and consent. Fr Nash explains why even the smallest degree of sexual sin should be mortal:

But why do we say that the smallest degree of such deliberate seeking is a mortal sin? The question seems to answer itself. Let a man give way in this matter, even the smallest degree, and very soon he will find to his bitter sorrow that he has let loose a wild beast in his heart. That beast becomes more and more insatiable. Let small gratifications be lawful, and very soon, men and women are swept into a very inferno of vice and passion.

Then he discusses some of the results of sexual sins in this life, such as imbecile children of parents with sexually transmitted diseases.

It is commonly said that Irish and hence Australian Catholicism was of a specially ‘Jansenist’ or puritanical variety. But it is also true that at the time of Fr Nash’s writing, thousands of unwanted children of casual sexual liaisons formed a major problem, many of them looked after in Catholic orphanages without government subsidy, and that syphilis and other STDs were widespread and largely incurable.

Despite the gravity of sexual sins, the Catholic Church was not in favour of criminalising all of them, in the manner of early Puritan Massachusetts. Nor did Catholic writing single out particular sexual sins such as homosexuality for special attention.⁹⁵ When in the 1970s decriminalisation of homosexuality became a political issue, Catholic Church leaders did not comment. The Church did however approve of legislative action to preserve public morals, for example by censorship. The general theory of state intervention in morals is explained by Dr Ryan in connection with the banning of James Joyce’s *Ulysses* in 1941:

Public authority has the right and the duty to secure the well-being of its citizens, to promote the good of the community as a whole, to preserve the moral standards without which civilisation would lapse into savagery and anarchy, and to foster

religion which is the necessary basis of morals. It has, therefore, both the right and the duty to ban and proscribe everything which is subversive of right order and good morals. This right has its origin in the very nature of civil society, the Author of which is God. And this right and duty must be exercised in accordance with the law of God.⁹⁶

Ulysses, he says, 'is a grossly obscene and blasphemous work; the product of a diseased and perverted mind; breathing the atmosphere of the sewer and the brothel and of perversions which cannot be named'. His attitudes were widely shared in Catholic and other circles. The Cahill government was to strengthen the *Obscene and Indecent Publications Act*.⁹⁷

Fourth, a crucial political fact of the 1950s was that the close Catholic Church-Labor nexus held in New South Wales through the Split, when it fell apart in Victoria and Queensland. When the crisis of the Split broke and threatened to consign Labor to the political wilderness, 'loyalty to the Cardinal' was called in to keep good Sydney Labor Catholic men in the party.⁹⁸ In addition, Joe Cahill's Catholicism meant there could be no suspicion of communist sympathies, as there was with Herbert Vere 'Doc' Evatt.⁹⁹ The Cahill government owed the Cardinal a favour.

However, the Church did not gain its main political objective – substantial state aid for Church schools. As a policy for the 1956 state election, Catholic schools were allowed to purchase books and equipment from the government stores at the lowest price – a decision reached with a very smooth and fast operation between Church and politicians¹⁰⁰ – but that was the limit of aid allowed by the Labor Federal Executive. State aid remained off the agenda until the early 1960s when Liberal Prime Minister Robert Menzies made political capital by initiating it.

Police culture

It was not new for the police and especially the Vice Squad to be vigorously policing the morals of the community in respect of obscene publications, prostitution, abortion, homosexuality, gaming and SP bookmaking. Those activities had not been of much concern to the law or police in the mid-19th century, but in the hundred years from 1850 there was increasing community concern, tightening of laws and police crackdowns.¹⁰¹ Nor were Masonic police any less vigorous than Catholic ones in pursuing those vices – Freemasonry is a deeply conservative ideology, though less theoretical than Catholicism.¹⁰²

The nature of these 'vices', most of them not criminal since about 1980 and not obviously seriously wrong to everyone even in earlier times, meant that enforcement did not always meet with willing cooperation in the community, and thus that opportunities for corruption were rife.

The Vice Squad – well before any special prominence of Catholics in the force – had in particular a history of keen pursuit of homosexuals, patrolling gay beats and conducting theatrical raids on venues like Black Ada's, a 'dancing academy' in

Wentworth Avenue, Sydney, run by a large African-American which was a cover for a gay nightclub.¹⁰³ In 1937 the Commissioner for Motor Transport was found naked in the bush with a police decoy and jailed.¹⁰⁴ In 1943, the editor of the *Daily Telegraph* was arrested in a Lang Park urinal and publisher Sir Frank Packer had to intervene.¹⁰⁵

Another relevant matter was that police were not well educated – no university graduates joined the police at that time – putting them at a disadvantage in dealing with such matters as allegedly obscene literary and artistic works and in understanding the sort of people who produced them. Bill Dovey KC (Gough Whitlam's father-in-law) cross-examined Det Sgt Munro of the Vice Squad in 1946 on *We Were the Rats*, a literary work that represented the gallant heroes of Tobruk as sometimes using rude words and viewing pornographic pictures. The exchange went as follows:

Have you ever heard of Chaucer? – No.
You never met him while in the Vice Squad? – No.
Have you ever heard of Byron? – No.
He was a lord. – Yes, I've heard of him.
Do you know if he was on Lord Louis Mountbatten's staff? – I don't know.
Do you know if he was a writer? – I don't know.¹⁰⁶

In dealing with vice, as in some other matters, the police conceived themselves as having a pastoral role as well as one of simply apprehending criminals. The name 'Guild of St Christopher' alludes to the saint's role in helping people. Addressing the Newcastle branch of the Guild in 1952, Bishop Gleeson of Maitland said:

Think of the power given you to prevent sin. There is scarcely a commandment whose observance you have not a part in securing. You have a share in preventing blasphemy, improper language, abuse of the Lord's Day, quarrelling, revenge, intemperance, immorality, dishonesty, and so forth. How many young girls do you not save from the hands of the wicked?¹⁰⁷

The Vice Squad in Sydney conducted 'dawn patrols' to warn and sometimes rescue women in near-prostitution situations.¹⁰⁸ In 1947 they took two women from a café on Pitt St at 8 am, questioned them beside a police car and demanded to look in their purses. It transpired that they were GPO telephonists who had just come from early mass on Ascension Thursday and did not appreciate being treated in public as prostitutes. *The Catholic Weekly* made a scene.¹⁰⁹

Not everyone enjoyed the well-meant attentions of the police. A first-year pharmacy student ventured into the Royal George pub, frequented by the Sydney Push, in 1962. He recalled:

I spoke to no-one all evening and no-one spoke to me until just before closing time when I went outside ... and two policemen seized me. I was flung into the back of a

Black Maria and driven to the back of Darling Harbour. I expected that something dreadful would happen. But the police had identified me correctly as a decent young man from the Western Suburbs. They tipped me out into the cold night air and gave me a lecture: 'Look, son, don't you go near that pub again – it's full of loose women, social diseases and drugs.' I thought 'Terrific!' and was back there next night.¹¹⁰

That aspect of police work was associated especially with the legendary Vice Squad man, Frank 'Bumper' Farrell. Farrell grew up in Catholic Marrickville between the wars, in the same community as Joe Cahill. A story from Bumper's childhood indicates the style of direct action that characterised his later working life:

Bumper and I and some other kids were playing cricket in the street. We saw some well-dressed men and women open the gate, march up the path, climb the steps and knock on Bumper's door. They were carrying a gramophone, one of those you crank up with a lever and the music comes out of a horn, and a stand. Meg Farrell [Bumper's mother] answered their knock, her face thunderous. The kids crowded closer, sensing that something exciting was about to happen. One suited man told Mrs Farrell that surely this was her lucky day because he intended to play her a record. Bumper's mother's eyes narrowed further, but she motioned for him to proceed. He ceremoniously placed the gramophone on the stand and turned the handle, which caused a voice to blare out of the gramophone declaring that Seventh Day Adventism was the one true religion and Catholicism was a disgrace borne of Satan that was leading the world to ruin. The speaker didn't get to finish his spiel. Meg picked up the gramophone and pitched it as hard and as high as she could over the picket fence and out onto the road, where it smashed into pieces. The stand followed the gramophone. She then chased the Seventh Day Adventists, cursing at the top of her voice and throwing haymakers, off her property.¹¹¹

Farrell had a very successful career in Rugby League but missed selection for the Kangaroos tour of 1948, allegedly due to Masonic selectors.¹¹² His police career was largely as sergeant in the Vice Squad at Darlinghurst station (that is, in charge of Kings Cross). He did things his way. His Catholicism was very public:

Bumper continued to pray morning and night, and went to confession once a week, stopping in at whichever Catholic Church was handy. He once impressed his family when they attended a service for the Little Sisters of the Poor at St Mary's Cathedral and he parked in a car space reserved for the Archbishop of Sydney, Cardinal Sir Norman Gilroy. 'She'll be right,' he assured them, and it was. The Cardinal and Bumper went way back.¹¹³

That influenced his views on who was deserving of help and who wasn't. 'The plight of the poor and put-upon of his police beat weighed heavily on Bumper. "The people the old man helped ... prostitutes, the homeless, the nuns and nurses at St Vincent's and St Margaret's, people from all walks of life."¹¹⁴ People of a Bohemian nature were less favoured, such as the performers at the drag venue Les Girls.¹¹⁵



Frank 'Bumper' Farrell on his retirement, Kings Cross, Sydney, 16 September 1976. A committed Catholic, 'He did things his way.' (Source: <https://consumer.licensing-publishing.nine.com.au/archive/2F3XC5RZ0WQ>)

Farrell’s biographer explains the police sense of a twilight zone between the legal and the illegal, where a degree of toleration applied:

They believed that prostitution, gambling and having an alcoholic drink after 6pm, even though against the law, were minor crimes, part of the Australian way of life, and that those providing and enjoying these activities should be left alone so long as other more serious crimes, such as murder, grievous bodily harm and extortion, were not committed in their execution. ‘There was no trouble in the brothels and SP shops and gambling clubs because the proprietors feared Bumper and adhered to the standards he insisted on.’¹¹⁶

With those understandings of background matters in hand, we can examine what the Cahill government and its new Commissioner of Police planned to do about vice.

The Vice Squad and imposition of moral order on gays and others

Police Commissioner Colin Delaney had a firm view on what the greatest menace facing Australia was. It was homosexuality.¹¹⁷ In a speech to the Vice Squad in 1952, he said that homosexuality was ‘damaging to the moral welfare of the community and must be checked at all costs’.¹¹⁸ In 1953 he ordered an ‘intensive drive to stamp out growing homosexuality in Sydney’, with all 84 members of the Sydney Vice Squad ‘switched to almost full-time duty locating the haunts of homosexuals’.¹¹⁹ He appointed a new and energetic team to the Vice Squad headed by Ron Walden,¹²⁰ former assistant treasurer of the Guild of St Christopher.¹²¹ Like Bumper Farrell, Walden was a noted footballer, but in Rugby Union, which Bumper thought ‘a poofster’s game’.¹²²

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH, DECEMBER 6, 1953

Vice Squad ordered to rid Sydney of male perverts (GROWING 'CANCER')

Police have begun an intensive drive to stamp out growing homosexuality in Sydney.

Special orders on the drive have been issued by Police Commissioner Delaney to all detectives and plainclothes police in city areas.

PLEA FOR PUBLIC HELP

As a result, all 84 members of Sydney's Vice Squad have been switched to almost full-time duty locating the haunts of homosexuals.

The drive will be concentrated on hotel bars, parks, theatres and public

He says he has consulted leading doctors and psychiatrists about increased perversion, but that they have been unable to account for it.

Mr. Delaney says more perverts are living in rooms at King's Cross than anywhere else in Sydney.

They persuade men and

for immoral purposes could be charged under the Act with having solicited a "male" person.

If found guilty, homosexuals often received the maximum penalty — six months' hard labor.

Such a severe sentence made most perverts keep to themselves and to stage these immoral acts in out-

search for the survivors, he kept sounding a bugle.

"Finally we heard and answering sound like cattle bells made by the survivors," he said.

"They were knocking pieces of metal together to answer my bugle call."

Stretchers-bearers carried all the survivors down to transport waiting to take them to Madrid.

Some are suffering severe frostbite as well as from their injuries.



Mr. Delaney

PRIEST FIRST TO AIR CRASH SCENE

C.P. and A.A.P.

MADRID, Sat.—A priest early today led a search party through a mountain snowstorm to eleven survivors of a crashed Spanish airliner.

Twenty-two people died in the crash.

One of the survivors, a woman, later died from her injuries.

Thirty-three people were in the plane when it crashed last night in a mountain range 40 miles north of Madrid.

The priest, Father Pablo yndurain, found the survivors scattered over a wide area around the wreckage.

Homosexuals be warned: the ‘Sunday Telegraph’, 6 December, 1953. (*The Daily Telegraph*, Sydney, NSW: 1931-1954, 6 December 1953, accessed 10 November 2022; <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-page27503270>)

The government backed him up, although the politicians do not give the impression of being as viscerally angry with homosexuals as Delaney. The *Crimes Act* had already been amended in 1951 to ensure that a defence of consent was impossible for an attempt to commit ‘the abominable crime of buggery’,¹²³ and when the Supreme Court inconveniently held that ‘soliciting’ meant only soliciting female prostitutes, work was undertaken to fix the problem.¹²⁴ In 1954 Cahill and the Cabinet agreed to Delaney’s request for harsher penalties,¹²⁵ and in 1955 Attorney-General Bill Sheahan told Parliament, ‘The Police Commissioner holds the view that remedial legislation is an urgent necessity to combat the evil.’¹²⁶ Sheahan said, ‘The Government has acted because it considers that the homosexual wave that unfortunately has struck this country – though not to the extent of continental countries – must be eradicated,’¹²⁷ especially to protect the young. The effect of the campaign is visible in court records, with convictions for homosexuality in the lower (magistrates) courts rising from about 100 in 1946 to more than 500 in 1958.¹²⁸

**HOMOSEXUAL
MENACE
IN AUSTRALIA**

**Homosexuality was Australia's
greatest menace, the Commissioner of
Police, Mr C. J. Delaney, said yesterday.**

Mr Delaney was discussing "crime detection in Australia and overseas" at a Rotary Club luncheon at the Trocadero.	"We hope soon to have a communication system which will have a police car at your door by the time you finish your emergency call," he said. Mr. Delaney said that he
---	--

Public enemy No. 1: Sydney Morning Herald, 11 June, 1958, p 5.

Everyone in authority took it for granted that homosexuality was a perversion needing at least some degree of prohibition. There was no discussion of possible decriminalisation (until the publication in 1957 of the UK Wolfenden Report). But when the need for harsh measures was argued for, there was one theme that recurred: paedophilia. Homosexuality and paedophilia were not simply equated or conflated, but they were thought of as continuous, as if it was obvious that homosexuality had a strong tendency to lead to paedophilia.

The 1951 article that originally used the phrase ‘greatest social menace’ (not then attributed to Delaney) reported on two men convicted of assaulting children.¹²⁹ An unnamed psychiatrist commenting on Delaney’s policies does distinguish between the secretive type, ‘to be pitied, poor devil’ and the ‘defiler of children’ who ‘deserves no mercy’.¹³⁰ Delaney in 1951, then still CIB chief, said that the ‘tragic feature of the perversion is the number of young boys involved’.¹³¹ In a 1953 speech, he said that the main problems faced by the police were the growing road toll and ‘growing cancer’ of perversion, which he described as meaning offences against boys.¹³²

A 1953 *Daily Telegraph* article picturing Delaney and headlined ‘Vice Squad ordered to rid Sydney of male perverts’ says that ‘many complaints are from managers of theatres where perverts prey on young boys’. The same article also reveals a quite different cause of concern, the inducement of youths to join a homosexual subculture. Unsuspecting young men are said to be invited to ‘join in discussions on matters ranging from art and ballet to philosophy and literature’ and to then find it hard to break away when the ‘real reason’ for sociability is revealed. The Vice Squad will set traps for them.¹³³

To understand what needs explaining, the situation in Sydney needs to be compared with policy on homosexuals elsewhere. It was broadly comparable to other places in the Western world, but had some special features. All Western countries saw rising concern about homosexuality and other forms of ‘vice’ in the 1950s, but Australia did not share the widespread fear in the United States that homosexuals would be blackmailed by communists.¹³⁴ Broadly similar policies of police persecution of homosexuals were in operation in Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide,¹³⁵ not all of which experienced Catholic dominance of political life or of policing. So the overall shape of policy on that and other forms of ‘vice’ is to be explained by wider currents, which remain controversial as they involve large multinational shifts in culture.

However, developments in New South Wales did have some unique features. They included Colin Delaney’s personal crusade against homosexuals, with his ability to direct Vice Squad resources and to gain political support through his close relationship with ministers, and, as described below, a homosexuals-only jail. Those are both unique to Sydney. Whatever broader factors were in play, decision-making in Sydney was in the hands of a particular small group of people with a shared organisation and shared theory.

The Vice Squad’s biggest scalp: the Goossens case

The Vice Squad’s highest-profile scalp came in 1956, when they picked up Sir Eugene Goossens at Mascot airport with a briefcase full of pornography, ruining his hitherto stellar musical career. That is not a story about homosexuality, but the Squad was disappointed that they were unable to jail Goossens for buggery, despite having the evidence.

Goossens, an English conductor and composer of international stature, in 1947 took up the positions of director of the Conservatorium of Music and first permanent conductor of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. With great energy he raised standards in both and dominated classical music in Sydney. He gave Joan Sutherland her stage debut in his opera *Judith*. He convinced Cahill that Sydney needed an opera house sited on Bennelong Point and Cahill drove the project through, against widespread opposition in his own party.¹³⁶

Goossens had also become involved with Rosaleen Norton, the ‘Witch of Kings Cross’ and recorded in letters and photographs his affair with her and her lover, Gavin Greenlees.¹³⁷ Norton did not follow his instructions to destroy them but stuffed them behind a sofa, from where they were stolen by petty criminals who offered them to the *Sun* newspaper.¹³⁸ On developing the photographs the *Sun* declined to print them but passed them to the Vice Squad.



The ‘Witch of Kings Cross’, Rosaleen Norton, modelling at the Studio for Realist Art, Sydney, 1948. (Photograph by Ted Hood, Wikimedia Commons)

The inside story of what happened next is told in a long interview many years later with Bert Trevenar, the Vice Squad man in charge of the case. Goossens visited Buckingham Palace to receive a knighthood and the Soho area to buy pornographic material. Although the police did not have the resources to observe him, the *Sun*’s journalistic acquaintances in London did. Trevenar and his superior Walden (a Mason and Catholic respectively, but Trevenar says there was no animosity) were ready to meet Goossens as he stepped off the plane at Mascot.

Some 1000 pornographic photos and other items were found in his briefcase with the Brahms and Beethoven. They have since been destroyed in accordance with the provisions of the *Customs Act*, but Trevenar described a few, taking particular offence at one showing a policewoman getting on a bike where ‘you can see everything’. There was no suggestion of child pornography. Goossens admitted everything and later pleaded guilty to the customs offence of importing prohibited goods. He was fined £100, resigned his positions in a blaze of publicity and returned to England.



High-profile scalp for the Vice Squad: Sir Eugene Goossens facing indecent pictures charges, 3 March 1956. (Source: Keystone Pictures USA/Zumapress/Alamy Stock Photo)

However, the Vice Squad had bigger fish to fry than a mere customs offence with a fine. They had solid evidence of Goossens' sexual acts with Norton and Greenlees that would have justified a substantial jail term. They applied for a warrant to the Attorney-General, Reg Downing (who had just succeeded his cousin Sheahan in the office). Trevenar describes what happened:

So anyway I was summoned with Ron Waldren [sic] to the Attorney General's office. We were waiting in the anteroom, waiting about an hour and Ron Waldren was spitting chips. And he's saying, not sotto voce [sic], but very loud about being kept there. And after a while Delaney storms along the corridor and I thought 'ello, 'ello, 'ello.

Interviewer: As Cops do.

As Cops do. Any road he was in there about quarter an hour and he came out with a look of thunder on his face. He walked past the anteroom, stopped, came back, looked in and beckoned me. So I followed him out to the footpath and he says, 'Sergeant, you've been duded. You've done a fantastic job and I want to congratulate you on a job well done, but you're not getting a warrant. So you can just get back to your station.'¹³⁹

Trevenar attributed the result to papal knights looking after one another. Delaney complained to the press that Downing had instructed him to drop charges; Downing replied that he would never direct the police but had given legal advice that the evidence did not disclose any crime committed by Goossens.¹⁴⁰

Lady Goossens, tracked down by the *Sun* at a convent in France where she was on retreat, said she would stay with her husband. That did not happen, as he brought from Australia a 26-year-old SSO pianist with whom he was having an affair.¹⁴¹

The two lowlifes who had robbed Norton's flat were jailed for offering an obscene publication for sale; Norton and Greenlees were eventually acquitted.¹⁴² Goossens died in 1962 and was buried with Catholic rites. Norton died in the Sacred Heart Hospice, Darlinghurst in 1979, tended by nuns. Both of them had been taken on a difficult journey by their libidos. Father Nash would have said, 'I told you so.'

Sydney's reputation in the international music world was confirmed the next year when Claudio Arrau, one of the century's leading pianists and father of two, was fined £5 for winking suggestively at a policeman in a Lang Park toilet (dismissed on appeal).¹⁴³

The Cahill government regarded itself as modern and enlightened. As Cahill had said in arguing for the Opera House, 'This State cannot go on without proper facilities for the expression of talent and the staging of the highest forms of artistic entertainment which add grace and charm to living and which help to develop and mould a better, more enlightened community.'¹⁴⁴ An enlightened approach to homosexuality, as understood in the 1950s, implied a move away from purely moral and policing actions to a more 'scientific' approach. That involved two innovations: segregation of homosexuals in jail, eventually in their own jail; and consultation

with the profession newly establishing itself as the scientific experts on all matters to do with deviance, the psychiatrists.

Reg Downing, then Justice Minister, announced the segregation of homosexual prisoners in existing prisons in 1953.¹⁴⁵ The old jail at Cooma was reopened in 1957 and designated for homosexuals only. It contained single-cell accommodation for 128. It is believed to have been the only jail in the world exclusively for homosexuals.¹⁴⁶ Downing defended segregation – for low-risk prisoners at Cooma and for the ‘intractable’ in a special section of Maitland jail – on the grounds that ‘otherwise there is always a danger to other prisoners.’¹⁴⁷ Some homosexual prisoners who had experienced severe assaults in non-segregated prisons regarded segregation as an improvement,¹⁴⁸ while Robert Adamson, later a noted poet, recalled pretending to be a homosexual to avoid bashings in Maitland jail.¹⁴⁹

Psychiatry, a profession rapidly establishing itself in the mid-20th century as a properly scientific field, mostly agreed with traditional views that there was something seriously wrong with homosexuality. It was classified as a disorder in the standard *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* up to 1973. The profession put forward a range of allegedly scientific theories of its causes, and offered or imposed treatments such as aversion therapy.¹⁵⁰

The state government set up an expert committee in 1958 to investigate the ‘causes and treatment’ of homosexuality. In accordance with contemporary views on an enlightened approach, it was headed by William Trethowan, the Professor of Psychiatry at Sydney University, who had been active in reforming the primitive conditions in the state’s mental hospitals. The inmates of Cooma were to be among the subjects studied.¹⁵¹

Five years later, after extensive delays, *The Sydney Morning Herald* reported on the imminent release of the committee’s interim report. The newspaper’s apparently well-informed discussion of the report’s contents hinted that it would recommend decriminalisation of homosexual acts between consenting adults, but said that Police Commissioner Norman Allan was strongly against legalising this ‘abominable crime’.¹⁵² Nothing further was heard. The Trethowan Report never appeared and no copies of it have been found, despite extensive searching. Homosexual acts were not decriminalised in New South Wales until 1984.

The Cahill government’s desire to be enlightened and scientific coincided with the Wild West period of psychiatry, when rash pioneers experimented with ill-tested experimental drugs and psychosurgery. If Cahill’s best big spend was on the Opera House, his worst was on the Cerebral Surgery and Research Unit, established at Callan Park under the directorship of Dr Harry Bailey. Bailey was to become notorious later for the many deaths resulting from his ‘deep sleep’ insulin therapy at Chelmsford Hospital, but at this earlier period his main interest was in brain operations like lobotomies to ‘cure’ a range of psychiatric conditions.



Controversial psychiatrist Dr Harry Bailey, Premier Joe Cahill and Health Minister Billy Sheahan at the opening of the Cerebral Surgery and Research Unit, Callan Park, 1958. (Source: <https://consumer.licensing-publishing.nine.com.au/archive/2F3XC5NEDBHF>)

There were plans to send Cooma inmates to be treated by Trethowan and Bailey at the CSRU, but it is not known if that happened.¹⁵³ Someone rang Bailey in 1973 and asked about his brain operations; he said his team had performed 150 cingulo-tractotomy operations, 15 per cent of which were on homosexuals.¹⁵⁴ However, Bailey was a notoriously unreliable informant.

Conclusion

The memories of everyone old enough to remember are correct: the 1950s were a deeply conservative era in the Western world, especially in comparison with the late 1960s and later. Indeed, they were in most ways a time of increasing rather than relaxing conservatism. Many benefited, especially the baby-boomers brought up in stable family environments. But some paid a heavy price for not fitting the mould laid down by society's dominant values, notably illegitimate and institutionalised children, unmarried pregnant women and homosexuals.

The causes of that conservative dominance are varied and in the main common

to all Western countries. Anglophone countries without any special Catholic influence, such as the United Kingdom, the United States and New Zealand, and other Australian states such as South Australia, saw broadly similar attitudes and legislation, so it cannot be argued that if there had been no Catholic government in New South Wales, there would have been significantly more liberal legislation. Nevertheless, the cases of de Valera's Ireland, Salazar's Portugal, Franco's Spain, de Gaulle's France and Christian Democrat Western Europe show that political dominance by conservative Catholic leaders was one way of ensuring social conservatism by government decree.

One element in the political success of those policies, in New South Wales as overseas, was Catholic moral theory and its reach into practice through the Catholic tradition of powerful mass organisations. Though a less extreme case than Ireland and Portugal, New South Wales in the 1950s saw a Catholic influence in politics which provided exceptional opportunities for Catholic moral theory to be implemented in government policy. The results were benign in areas like infant health and the abolition of capital punishment, but disastrous in the campaign against homosexuals.

Honorary Professor, University of New South Wales, Sydney

Acknowledgements

The author is grateful to John Luttrell, David Hilliard and Edmund Campion for helpful comments.

Notes

- 1 John Luttrell, *Norman Thomas Gilroy: an obedient life*, St Pauls, Strathfield NSW, 2017, p 81.
- 2 David Hilliard, 'God in the Suburbs: the religious culture of Australian cities in the 1950s', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol 24, 1991, pp 399-419.
- 3 Michael Hogan, 'The Sydney Style: New South Wales Labor and the Catholic Church', *Labour History*, no 36, 1979, pp 39-46, at p 42.
- 4 Western European background, in Hugh Macleod, 'Building the "Catholic ghetto": Catholic organisations 1870-1914', in W. J. Sheils and Diana Wood (eds), *Studies in Church History*, vol 23: Voluntary Religion, 1986, pp 411-44.
- 5 Overview of benefit societies and sodalities in Newcastle area in Beverly Ruth Zimmerman, 'The Making of a Diocese and the Moulding of Its People: The Maitland Diocese During the Episcopacy of James Murray, 1866-1909', PhD thesis, University of New England, 1998, ch 8. <https://rune.une.edu.au/web/bitstream/1959.11/10818/2/open/SOURCE11.pdf>
- 6 James Franklin, *Corrupting the Youth: a history of philosophy in Australia*, Macleay Press, Sydney, 2003, pp 257-8.
- 7 *Burrowa News*, 7 June 1907, p 1; AHC and Catholic Club debate "Is capitalism a failure?" *Catholic Freeman's Journal*, 5 December 1940, p 23.
- 8 Edmund Campion, *Australian Catholics*, Penguin, Ringwood Vic, 1987, pp 115-16, 120.
- 9 Campion, *Australian Catholics*, pp 116-18; Stephen Utick, *Captain Charles, Engineer of Charity: the remarkable life of Charles Gordon O'Neill*, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest NSW, 2008.
- 10 K. Coen, *Monsignor John Leonard and the Catholic Youth Organisation*, St Paul's, Strathfield NSW, 2000.

- 11 *Catholic Freeman's Journal*, 1 October 1936, p 31.
- 12 A. W. Maher, *Mudgee Catholic Centenary: a short history of the parish of Mudgee over the past century and a guide to St Mary's, Mudgee*, Mudgee Guardian, Mudgee NSW, 1952, pp 62-8; an account of a similar range in Richmond, Vic in Richmond Catholic Parish History, Richmond Parish, Richmond, 2020, <https://www.ignatius.org.au/about/community/publications/category/3-richmond?download=14:richmond-catholic-parish-history>, pp 55-60.
- 13 Population of Mudgee Municipality c.4300, ([https://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/free.nsf/0/DAB4F568806C6494CA2579E2001837D8/\\$File/33111_1950_51.pdf](https://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/free.nsf/0/DAB4F568806C6494CA2579E2001837D8/$File/33111_1950_51.pdf)) and estimating 30 per cent Catholic. (The surrounding shire had a similar population but rural dwellers would have found it hard to get to town to participate in meetings).
- 14 *The Story of the Twenty-Ninth International Eucharistic Congress, Sydney, Australia, September 5-9 1928: a pictorial record and a review of the Congress, Sydney, 1928*, compiled by P. C. Cregan, L. Rumble and J. Meany, Green Press, Sydney, 1928; summaries in Samantha Frappell, 'International Eucharistic Congress 1928', Dictionary of Sydney, 2012, https://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/international_eucharistic_congress_1928 and Campion, *Australian Catholics*, pp 93-6.
- 15 Jeff Kildea, *Tearing the Fabric: sectarianism in Australia, 1910 to 1925*, Citadel Books, Sydney, 2002; Jeff Kildea, 'Troubled Times: a history of the Catholic Federation of New South Wales, 1910 to 1924', PhD thesis, University of New South Wales, 2002, <http://hdl.handle.net/1959.4/65387>.
- 16 Patrick O'Farrell, *The Catholic Church and Community: an Australian history*, UNSW Press, Sydney, 1985, p 380.
- 17 Campion, *Australian Catholics*, pp 118-20; Cliff Baxter, *Reach for the Stars: 1919-2009, NSW Knights of the Southern Cross: bold men of faith, hope and charity*, Connor Court, Ballan, 2009; Luttrell, *Gilroy*, pp 162-4.
- 18 *Freeman's Journal*, 2 May 1914; *Catholic Press*, 21 June 1934; Mike Davis, *Dooley's Lidcombe Catholic Club: our history*, Dooley's Lidcombe Catholic Club, Lidcombe NSW, 2012; Mike Davis, *Liverpool Catholic Club*, Liverpool Catholic Club Pty Ltd, Prestons NSW, 2014.
- 19 James Franklin, 'Catholic Thought and Catholic Action: Dr Paddy Ryan MSC and the Red Peril', *Journal of the Australian Catholic Historical Society* (hereafter *JACHS*), vol 17, 1996, pp 44-55.
- 20 *Catholic Press*, 19 September 1935, p 19.
- 21 *Catholic Press*, 2 July 1925, p 23; report on Catholic Speakers Guild, *Catholic Press*, 7 March 1935, p 12.
- 22 *Catholic Freeman's Journal*, 8 August 1935, p 30.
- 23 *Freeman's Journal*, 10 April 1913; Catherine O'Carrigan, 'Barlow, Mary Kate (1865-1934)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol 7, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/barlow-mary-kate-5134>.
- 24 Luttrell, *Gilroy*, pp 156-8.
- 25 Luttrell, *Gilroy*, pp 154-5; Campion, *Australian Catholics*, pp 113-15; Alison Healey, 'The Grail: 75 years in Australia: an international women's movement and the Australian Church', *JACHS*, vol 31/32, 2010-11, pp 27-38.
- 26 Franklin, *Corrupting the Youth*, pp 253-6; *Catholic Freeman's Journal*, 23 December 1926, p 17.
- 27 *Sydney Morning Herald* (hereafter *SMH*), 26 May 1941, p 6.
- 28 Peter Blayney, 'A History of the Catholic Bushwalking Club', *JACHS*, vol 31/32, 2010/11, pp 39-52.
- 29 Luttrell, *Gilroy*, p 85; *Catholic Freeman's Journal*, 26 September 1940, p 18.
- 30 Blayney, 'A History of the Catholic Bushwalking Club', p 47.
- 31 Described in Melbourne in Race Mathews, *Of Labour and Liberty: Distributism in Victoria 1891-1966*, Monash University Publishing, Clayton Vic, 2017, chs 7-8; and Colin Jory, *The Campion Society and Catholic Social Militancy in Australia 1929-1939*, Harpham, Sydney, 1986;

- in Adelaide in Katharine Massam, *Sacred Threads: Catholic spirituality in Australia 1922-1962*, UNSW Press, Sydney, 1996, pp 237-9.
- 32 Santamaria to Mannix, 11 December 1952, in Patrick Morgan (ed), *B. A. Santamaria: Your Most Obedient Servant*, Miegunyah Press, Melbourne, 2007, pp 73-9, at p 75.
- 33 Hogan, 'The Sydney Style', p 40.
- 34 Peter Golding, 'They Called him Old Smoothie: John Joseph Cahill', *JACHS*, vol 31/32, 2010/11, pp 75-82; origins of the Catholic-Labor alignment in Celia Hamilton, 'Irish Catholics of New South Wales and the Labor Party, 1890-1910', *Historical Studies, Australia and New Zealand*, 8 (31), 1958, pp 254-67.
- 35 B. A. Santamaria, 'Report on anti-Communist campaign', 1944, in *B. A. Santamaria: Running the Show*, Patrick Morgan (ed), Miegunyah Press, Melbourne, 2008, pp 115-29, discussion at p 113.
- 36 *Catholic Freeman's Journal*, 11 February 1937; a protest by unionists reported in *Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate*, 16 June 1937, p 3.
- 37 *Catholic Weekly*, 4 December 1947, p 1.
- 38 *Catholic Weekly*, 23 October 1952, p 6.
- 39 *Catholic Weekly*, 18 September 1952, p 10.
- 40 *Newcastle Sun*, 4 March 1953, p 5.
- 41 *Canberra Times*, 23 September 1957, p 3.
- 42 *Catholic Freeman's Journal*, 21 September 1939, p 19.
- 43 *Catholic Press*, 19 December 1940, p 9.
- 44 *Catholic Weekly*, 17 June 1954, p 10.
- 45 *Catholic Weekly*, 11 April 1946, p 21.
- 46 *Catholic Weekly*, 25 May 1950, p 4.
- 47 *Catholic Weekly*, 31 May 1951, p 3.
- 48 *Catholic Weekly*, 10 June 1954, p 9.
- 49 *Catholic Weekly*, 26 November 1953, p 24; 17 June 1954, p 7.
- 50 *Catholic Weekly*, 15 December 1949, p 2.
- 51 *Catholic Freeman's Journal*, 24 October 1940, p 13.
- 52 *Catholic Weekly*, 26 December 1946, p 7.
- 53 *Catholic Press*, 26 April 1928, p 39; *Catholic Weekly*, 2 April 1953, p 25.
- 54 *Catholic Weekly*, 25 October 1945, p 1; 1 November 1945, p 7; US background in St Thomas More Institute for Legal Research, 'The Guild of Catholic Lawyers of New York: a history of twenty-seven years', *Catholic Lawyer*, 1 (2), 1955, pp 101-12.
- 55 *Catholic Weekly*, 18 February 1954, p 10.
- 56 J. A. McCarthy, introduction, in John McCarthy and Anthony Reynolds (eds), *Thomas More: The Saint and the Society: addresses and articles on St Thomas More further published to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of the foundation of the St Thomas More Society on 14th August 1945*, St Thomas More Society, Sydney, 1995, pp 1-14.
- 57 St Thomas More Society: About Us, <https://stms.org.au/about-us-frequently-asked-questions/>
- 58 Franklin, *Corrupting the Youth*, pp 388-98.
- 59 Desmond Ryan, 'The Sydney University Newman Society: the early years', *JACHS*, vol 6, no 2, 1979, pp 63-78.
- 60 Australian Catholic Students' Association, <https://www.auscatholicstudents.com/our-mission-identity>
- 61 Anthony Young, 'The Sydney Newman Graduate Association, 1944-1979: an introductory history', *JACHS*, vol 6, no 2, 1979, pp 43-62.
- 62 Patrick O'Farrell, 'That which was lost: *Manna 1957-1968*', *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol 79, 2002, pp 155-63.
- 63 *Southern Cross* (Adelaide), 26 January 1940, p 11.
- 64 A. E. Cahill, 'The Australian Catholic Historical Society: the first fifty years', *JACHS*, vol 12, 1990, pp 31-8.
- 65 *Catholic Advocate* (Brisbane), 31 May 1934, pp 12, 13, 25; overseas background in Jessica

- Martucci, 'Religion, Medicine, and Politics: Catholic physicians' guilds in America, 1909-32', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, vol 92, 2018, pp 287-316; Carla Zawisch, 'The Guilds of Catholic Doctors in Europe', *Linacre Quarterly*, vol 12, no 3, 1944, pp 57-61.
- 66 For example, *Catholic Weekly*, 16 September 1954, p 6.
- 67 *Transactions of the Catholic Medical Guild of St Luke*, 1937-55; *Transactions of the Medical Guild of St Luke*, 1956-69; example articles in *Advocate* (Melbourne), 25 November 1943, p 11; *Catholic Weekly*, 15 April 1954, p 40.
- 68 *Catholic Press*, 8 April 1937, p 19.
- 69 *Catholic Freeman's Journal*, 16 November 1939, p 23; 28 December 1939, p 27.
- 70 *Catholic Weekly*, 19 July 1945, p 20.
- 71 Official policy and natural law reasoning laid out in Dr Rumble's 1934 Australian Catholic Truth Society pamphlet, 'The Truth About Birth Control', <http://pamphlets.org.au/docs/cts/australia/acts0662a/>
- 72 Sylvia Bannah, 'Birds, Bees and Birth Control: a history of Family Planning in Queensland 1971-2001', PhD thesis, University of Queensland, 2010, p 10.
- 73 *Catholic Press*, 19 December 1935, p 17.
- 74 *Catholic Freeman's Journal*, 24 February 1938, p 15; self-employed pharmacies argued to be in accord with Catholic social theory in *Catholic Weekly*, 15 March 1945, p 6.
- 75 *Catholic Weekly*, 7 May 1953, p 8.
- 76 *Catholic Weekly*, 6 May 1954, p 6.
- 77 *Catholic Press*, 19 December 1940, p 9.
- 78 *Catholic Freeman's Journal*, 21 December 1939, p 19.
- 79 *Daily Telegraph*, 12 March 1940, p 5.
- 80 *Catholic Freeman's Journal*, 19 December 1940, p 15.
- 81 Colonial Police Act 1850, http://classic.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/num_act/cpa1850n38175/
- 82 *SMH*, 18 December 1944, p 4.
- 83 *Catholic Weekly*, 16 December 1948, p 3.
- 84 *Catholic Weekly*, 25 December 1952, p 9.
- 85 *SMH*, 17 May 1983; P. Molloy, 'Portrait of a police chief', *SMH*, 6 June 1979, p 7.
- 86 Michael Hogan, 'The Sydney Style', p 42.
- 87 Brian Croke, 'Prelates and Politics: the Carroll style', *JACHS*, vol 22, 2001, pp 31-45; Brian Croke, 'Carroll, James Patrick (1908-1995)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol 19, 2021, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/carroll-james-patrick-28122>.
- 88 *Canberra Times*, 24 March 1955, p 1; Jo Lennan and George Williams, 'The Death Penalty in Australian Law', *Sydney Law Review*, vol 34, 2012, pp 659-94, at p 680.
- 89 David Hilliard, 'Church, Family and Sexuality in Australia in the 1950s', *Australian Historical Studies*, 27 (109), 1997, pp 133-36.
- 90 Katharine Massam, 'The Blue Army and the Cold War: Anti-communist devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary in Australia', *Australian Historical Studies*, 24 (97), 1991, pp 420-8.
- 91 Except by Mannix: James Franklin, Gerald O. Nolan and Michael Gilchrist, *The Real Archbishop Mannix: from the sources*, Connor Court, Ballarat Vic, 2015, p 142.
- 92 Joseph A. Komonchak, 'The American Contribution to "Dignitatis Humanae": the role of John Courtney Murray, SJ', *US Catholic Historian*, 24 (1), 2006, pp 1-21; Eric D'Arcy, *Conscience and its Right to Freedom*, Sheed and Ward, London and New York, 1961; local debate in Henry Mayer (ed), *Catholics and the Free Society: an Australian symposium*, Cheshire, Melbourne, 1961, with comment in Austin Gough, 'Catholics and the Free society', *Australian Historical Studies*, 10 (39), 1962, pp 370-8.
- 93 For example Franklin, Nolan and Gilchrist, *The Real Archbishop Mannix*, pp 193-7.
- 94 Robert Nash SJ, 'Can I keep pure?', 7th edn, Dublin 1939; Melbourne ACTS 1944; quoted from the 1953 reprint, <http://pamphlets.org.au/docs/cts/australia/acts0947/>
- 95 A rare Catholic homosexual community in the Order of St Gerard Majella, an order of

- teaching brothers founded in Western Sydney in 1960, https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/sites/default/files/CTJH.280.01003.0001_R.pdf
- 96 *Catholic Freeman's Journal*, 30 October 1941, p 8.
- 97 David Clune, 'The Labor Government in New South Wales 1941 to 1965: a study in longevity in government', PhD thesis, Sydney University, 1990, <https://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/bitstream/handle/2123/2229/The%20Labour%20Government%20in%20NSW%201941-1965.pdf>, p 89;
- Alan Fitzgerald, 'Absurdity and Inconsistency of Australian Censorship', *Canberra Times*, 29 December 1964, p 2.
- 98 Luttrell, *Gilroy*, pp 247-55; Franklin, 'Catholic Thought and Catholic Action'.
- 99 Clune, 'The Labor Government in New South Wales', p 119.
- 100 Hogan, 'Sydney Style', p 44.
- 101 Barbara Sullivan, *The Politics of Sex: prostitution and pornography in Australia since 1945*, Cambridge University Press, Port Melbourne, 1997, ch 1.
- 102 Franklin, *Corrupting the Youth*, pp 253-6.
- 103 Garry Wotherspoon, *Gay Sydney: a history*, NewSouth Publishing, Sydney, 2016, pp 45-6.
- 104 Michael Flynn, 'Maddocks, Sydney Aubrey (1881-1963)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol 15 (2000), <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/maddocks-sydney-aubrey-11031>.
- 105 Frank Cain, 'MacKay, William John (1885-1948)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol 10 (1986), <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/mackay-william-john-7381>.
- 106 *Daily Telegraph*, 25 April 1946, p 7.
- 107 *Catholic Weekly*, 4 December 1952, p 8.
- 108 Steve Meacham, 'Pioneer policewoman whose virtue was vice', *SMH*, 12 May 2012, <https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/pioneer-policewoman-whose-virtue-was-vice-20120511-1yi2u.html>; *Sun* (Sydney), 1 June 1947, p.11.
- 109 *Catholic Weekly*, 29 May 1947, p 1, 5 June 1947, p 1.
- 110 Sally McInerney, 'The Push revisited', *SMH*, 22 October 1983, pp 33-4; Franklin, *Corrupting the Youth*, p 165.
- 111 Larry Writer, *Bumper: The Life and Times of Frank 'Bumper' Farrell*, Hachette, Sydney, 2011, p 14.
- 112 Writer, *Bumper*, p 204.
- 113 Writer, *Bumper*, p 340.
- 114 Writer, *Bumper*, p 299.
- 115 Writer, *Bumper*, pp 281, 286.
- 116 Writer, *Bumper*, pp 240-1.
- 117 'Homosexual menace in Australia', *SMH*, 11 June 1958, p 5; the phrase used without attribution in *Sun*, 1 August 1951, p 11; G. Wotherspoon, 'The Greatest Menace Facing Australia: homosexuality and the state in NSW during the Cold War', *Labour History*, no 56, 1989, pp 15-28.
- 118 *SMH*, 19 November 1952, p 3.
- 119 'Vice squad ordered to rid Sydney of male perverts', *Sunday Telegraph*, 6 December 1953, p 5.
- 120 *Northern Star*, 27 September 1952, p 5; *Sun*, 12 June 1953, p 7.
- 121 *Catholic Freeman's Journal*, 21 December 1939, p 19.
- 122 Writer, *Bumper*, p 106.
- 123 Wotherspoon, *Gay Sydney*, p 109; a 1950 acquittal after arrest by a 'tall, good-looking Vice Squad man' in *Truth*, 14 May 1950, p 37.
- 124 Ex parte LANGLEY; Re HUMPHRIS (1953) 53 SR (NSW) 324, <https://nswlr.com.au/view-pdf/53-SR-NSW-324>; *SMH*, 30 April 1954, p 6; Sullivan, *The Politics of Sex*, pp 53-4.
- 125 *Truth*, 13 June 1954, p 49.
- 126 *NSW Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 23 March 1955, p 3223; Wotherspoon, *Gay Sydney*, p 112.
- 127 *NSW Parliamentary Debates*, Legislative Assembly, 23 March 1955, p 3230.
- 128 Graham Willett, 'The Darkest Decade: Homophobia in 1950s Australia', *Australian*

- Historical Studies*, 27, 1997, pp 120-32.
- 129 *Sun*, 1 August 1951, p 11.
- 130 *Newcastle Sun*, 3 December 1953, p 25.
- 131 *National Advocate*, 20 October 1951, p 2.
- 132 *SMH*, 2 December 1953, p 11.
- 133 *Daily Telegraph*, 6 December 1953, p 5; Brisbane parallel in *Brisbane Telegraph*, 11 December 1953, p 13.
- 134 David K. Johnson, *The Lavender Scare*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2004.
- 135 Graham Willett, 'From Vice to Homosexuality: policing perversion in the 1950s', in Shirleene Robinson (ed), *Homophobia: an Australian history*, Federation Press, Annandale NSW, 2008, pp 113-27, <https://www.google.com.au/books/edition/Homophobia/IWHOI2s9JqQC?hl=en&gbpv=1&pg=113>.
- 136 David Salter, 'Goossens, Sir Eugene Aynsley (1893-1962)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol 14 (1996), <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/goossens-sir-eugene-aynsley-10329>.
- 137 Details and documents in Neville Stuart Drury, 'Rosaleen Norton's contribution to the Western esoteric tradition', PhD, Newcastle University, 2008, ch 8.
- 138 David Salter, 'The conservatorium director and the witch', *SMH Good Weekend*, 2 July 2015, <https://www.smh.com.au/lifestyle/the-conservatorium-director-and-the-witch-20150702-gi3h8y.html>; Harold Tucker, 'The sad tale of Sir Eugene Goossens', Classical Music Guide Forums, 2007. <https://classicalmusicguide.com/viewtopic.php?t=16828>
- 139 David Salter, 'The strange case of Sir Eugene and the witch', *Good Weekend/SMH*, 3 July 1999, p 16, full interview at <https://nedmccann.blogspot.com/search?updated-max=2009-04-16T20:35:00-07:00>.
- 140 *Canberra Times*, 27 March 1956, p 6.
- 141 Salter, 'The strange case'; Tucker, 'The sad tale'.
- 142 Drury, 'Rosaleen Norton's contribution', p 268.
- 143 *SMH*, 29 August 1957, p 9; Wotherspoon, *Gay History*, pp 121-2.
- 144 Sydney Opera House: The Competition, <https://www.sydneyoperahouse.com/our-story/sydney-opera-house-history/the-competition.html>.
- 145 *Daily Examiner* (Grafton), 26 February 1953, p 1; implementation in Maitland jail in *Newcastle Sun*, 6 August 1954, p 2.
- 146 Patrick Abboud and Simon Cunich, 'The Greatest Menace: Inside the Gay Prison Experiment', Audible Audiobook, 2022, <https://www.audible.com.au/pd/The-Greatest-Menace-Audiobook/B09S169W9J> summary at <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-02-15/podcast-the-greatest-menace-reveals-cooma-jail-as-gay-prison/100830608>; briefly mentioned in *Canberra Times*, 1 July 1958, p 10.
- 147 'State govt grant for study of homosexuality', *SMH*, 24 January 1958, p 4; discussion in Abboud and Cunich, ch 2.
- 148 Marcus Finnane, 'Camp prisoners: a personal experience', *Camp Ink* 3 (4), February 1973, p 5, <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-788130631/view?sectionId=nla.obj-828540848&partId=nla.obj-788139731>.
- 149 Abboud and Cunich, ch 6
- 150 Survey in Jack Drescher, 'Out of DSM: Depathologizing homosexuality', *Behavioral Sciences*, 5, 2015, pp 565-75.
- 151 *SMH*, 27 February 1958, p 3, *Canberra Times*, 1 July 1958, p 10.
- 152 'Controversial report on homosexuality in NSW', *SMH*, 1 March 1963, p 2; further discussion in Abboud and Cunich, ch 8.
- 153 Abboud and Cunich, ch 5.
- 154 John Ware, 'Psychosurgery in Australia', *Camp Ink*, 3 (4), February 1973, <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-828541003>; 'Gay Liberation demonstration against Bailey', in Sue Wills, 'The Politics of Sexual Liberation', PhD thesis, Sydney University, 1981, pp 182-3.

Copyright of Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society is the property of Royal Australian Historical Society and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.