

e-Deliverance

A Peaceful Death is Everybody's Right

May/June

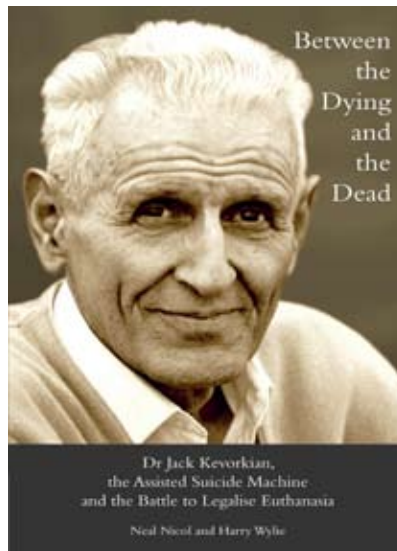
Exit International

2007

Dr Jack Kevorkian Gets Freedom - 1 June 2007

On 1 June 2007, the world's most well-known voluntary euthanasia activist Dr Jack Kevorkian, was finally released on parole from Michigan's Thumb Correctional Facility after serving 8 years, one month and 17 days of a 25 year sentence for administering a lethal injection to a terminally ill patient (Thomas Youk who was dying of Motor Neurone Disease).

Acclaimed by the *British Medical Journal* in 1996 as a modern "medical hero", Dr Kevorkian has endured the harshness of prison life at considerable personal cost. In 2005, the Hepatitis C which Dr Kevorkian had contracted while researching blood transfusions more than 40 years ago reached dangerous levels. He is also now suffering from hypertension, cardiovascular disease, arthritis and cataracts.



At 79 years of age, parole for Dr Kevorkian is long overdue. Polls in the US have consistently shown majority public support for his early release from prison. Despite this, he has had numerous applications for parole denied, until now. According to Exit International US President, Neal Nicol, who is also Dr Kevorkian's

official biographer and author of *Between the Dying and the Dead: Dr Jack Kevorkian, the Assisted Suicide Machine and the Battle to Legalise Euthanasia*, "as soon as Jack is allowed to travel, he

would like to visit his sister Flora Holzheimer in Germany. Afterwards, he plans to visit Armenia to study medical research that was done in the fifth century." Neal also hopes that at some point Jack will re-join the fight for end of life choice, "It would be a tremendous waste of resources if he stopped," says Neal.

While Exit is very much hoping to have the Jack Kevorkian story told at next year's main Conference, we know that there will be a long queue to reach him. Already, he has media interviews scheduled with Larry King (*Larry King Live*) and Mike Wallace (*US 60 Minutes*). There is also a planned feature length movie that will be based on *Between the Dying and the Dead*.

Despite many VE organisations shunning Jack for his confrontational, hands-on, approach to the end of life choices debate, Exit Director Dr Philip Nitschke has publicly supported him at every public opportunity. Exit International joins Neal Nicol in acknowledging that "no individual has sacrificed as much as Jack in the right-to-die movement" and we, too, "welcome him home."



This Edition

- | | |
|---|----------|
| • Dr Jack Kevorkian Gets Freedom | - Page 1 |
| • ABC 4 Corners 'Final Call' | - Page 2 |
| • Australian Penthouse Breaks Ranks | - Page 3 |
| • Exit Meetings & Workshops | - Page 3 |
| • Exit 2007 Annual General Meeting | - Page 3 |
| • I Bequeath the Python book launch | - Page 4 |
| • New Chapter Coordinators | - Page 4 |
| • Dr John Elliott's Legacy Lives On | - Page 5 |
| • Quarterly Essay & the Future of PPH | - Page 5 |
| • Exit Donation / Shop Order Form | - Page 6 |
| + Caren Jenning Legal Defense Fund Lift-out | |

ABC TV 4 Corners ‘Final Call’

There has been a remarkable response to the memorable *4 Corners* program ‘Final Call’ which screened on ABC TV on 7 May. Produced by Janine Cohen, ‘Final Call’ has led to a rush of enquiries from members of the public wanting to find out more about Exit and how they, too, can access end-of-life information.



Lorna Price

Receptionist, Amanda McClure, says that in her 10 years of association with Exit she has never seen such a positive and overwhelming response to the end-of-life rights issue in the media. Comments have included: “hope and light within a dark tunnel”, “superb, clear and well outlined”, “more power to the oldies” and “liberated millions.”

Of all the calls received, Amanda says it has been the reaction of Exit members to AMA President Dr Rosanna Capolingua that has been of note. The general sentiment expressed was that the AMA’s attitude to voluntary euthanasia was completely out of touch. Right to Life Australia spokesman Chiang Lim also came in for criticism with many claiming his comments and responses were superficial, and showed little understanding of the concerns of many of the elderly.

Exit cannot express enough gratitude to our members who stoically fronted the cameras. Without the courage and commitment of people like Dr Richard Opie, Bill Cooper, Ed and Coral Brown, Muriel Arnott and Lorna Price (and their own families) the documentary could not have been made.

Exit would like also to make special mention of the handful of members of the first Peanut Project who showed particular bravery in discussing publicly and for the first time, how they came to achieve their goal of producing a barbiturate-based Peaceful Pill. John Edge of the Gold Coast used the program to explain clearly the basis of the project, and Bron Norman of the Sunshine Coast took the lead in talking to the media post-screening, speaking with the media both here and overseas.

While there has been some comment critical of the public exposure that *4 Corners* has brought the activities of Exit, Director Philip Nitschke maintains that it is only through this type of media attention that members of the public come to know about Exit and the importance of developing individual end of life strategies.

“It is not enough to do good work, it is equally important that we share this knowledge” says Dr Nitschke. Of course, one needs be very careful when talking to the media, whether it be about the Peanut Project, or Mexican Nembutal.



Retired Surgeon, Dr Richard Opie

“We can not talk in any way that could compromise the work that we do. But we recognise the need to inform the broader community and show them that the status quo is totally unsatisfactory if we are ever to see significant social change in this issue.

Exit thanks all those who agreed to participate in the program and congratulates Janine Cohen and her team. We also extend a warm welcome to all the new Exit members who have joined the organisation following the screening.

“I Bequeath the Python”

Book Launch on the Gold Coast

In front of a crowd of around 30 Exit and VESQ supporters, Dr Philip Nitschke was delighted to launch *I Bequeath the Python* by Gold Coast Exit Chapter Coordinator, Elaine Arch-Rowe. Developed to provide a single resource for end-of-life planning, from living will information to funeral arrangements, *I Bequeath the Python* has been selling well with a number of Exit members ordering multiple copies, one for each member of the family.

According to author Elaine Arch-Rowe, the need for a one-stop-shop document came about during a discussion with her own daughter when it was discovered that mother and daughter had very different ideas about one another’s funerals (was it cremation, burial or a donation in the name of science?), not to mention who got what. *I Bequeath the Python* is available on mail order from Exit for \$15 (including postage and handling). To order - see Page 6



Elaine Arch-Rowe & Philip Nitschke



Millicent Barry with Jill Kleinman



Neal and Edna Phillips



Author Elaine Arch-Rowe with John Edge & Bron Norman

New Chapter Coordinators

Exit welcomes New Chapter Coordinators Julia Harrison (08-8390-1822) and Janine Gebert in Adelaide (8431-1668) and Al Hartley (02-6657-2355) who has started a NSW Northern Rivers chapter for Exit, operating from his home town of Dorrigo. Please feel free to call Julia, Janine and Al re activities in these areas.

Contact Us

Exit International

PO Box 37781 Darwin NT 0821 Australia
ph 1300 10 EXIT (3948) fax 02-8905-9249
contact@exitinternational.net

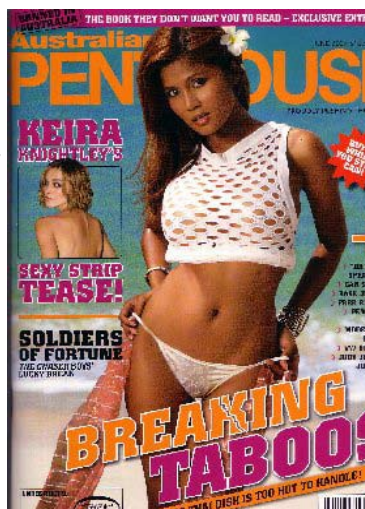
Donate to Exit

Exit relies on donations to fund its workshop,
private visits and R&D programs
Bequest forms can be obtained from Exit.

Australian Penthouse Breaks Ranks

This month Exit International found a new, if not slightly odd, ally in *Australian Penthouse*. In a move that will no doubt challenge the authorities, the June edition of *Penthouse* has boldly printed extracts from Drs Nitschke & Stewart's banned *Peaceful Pill Handbook*.

In a significant article based on an extensive interview with Philip (but no photo shoot), *Penthouse* has devoted several pages to the issue of Voluntary Euthanasia information and censorship in Australia. According to Editor, Ian Gerrard, *Penthouse* is no stranger to censorship.



"We're an adult magazine and I think we should talk about adult issues ... The banning of Philip Nitschke's (book) has deprived us of yet another choice, pre-emptively silenced yet another debate and stripped away another human right."

The article continues: "In the Superannuity State, the Government not only wants to tell you how you should live, but how you should die, preferably with as little dignity as possible ... Hopefully the following extracts from this intelligent, reasoned and now totally illegal book will go a small way to redressing the balance."

Exit 2007 AGM

The Exit Annual General Meeting will be held at 3pm on Wed 26 September at the Toowong City Library. Exit members are welcome although voting rights extend only to the directors of Final Exit (Australia) Ltd. Email copies of Exit's constitution will be available from July from the office at contact@exitinternational.net

June Sydney Chapter Meeting

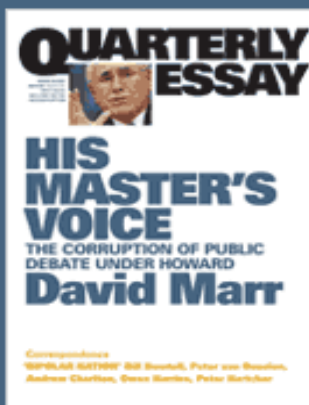
Local Chapter Meetings continue monthly around the country. To find out who your local Coordinator is, please call the Exit office.

The next Sydney chapter meeting will be held on 14 June. For details call Madeleine on 0432-611-695 or madeleine@smartchat.net.au

Censorship in Australia & the Peaceful Pill Handbook

Exit urges all members to keep a lookout for the June edition of the *Quarterly Essay* titled 'His Masters Voice' and written by award-winning *Sydney Morning Herald* journalist David Marr. Subtitled 'The Corruption of Public Debate Under Howard' the *Essay* looks at issues of censorship in general, and the banning of *The Peaceful Pill Handbook* as one of four examples of this Government's systematic encroachment on free speech.

Further afield, in a final meeting with lawyers from the Public Interest Advocacy Centre, *Handbook* authors Philip Nitschke & Fiona Stewart have sadly decided not to take legal action in the Federal Court to overturn the book's ban. This decision has been made purely on financial grounds as the authors cannot afford the possible \$100K in legal costs if the case were lost. The NSW Council of Civil Liberties has likewise decided not to take action.



"More than any law, any failure of the Opposition or individual act of bastardry over the last decade, what's done most to gag democracy in this country is the sense that debating John Howard gets us nowhere."

David Marr, QE26

Dr John Elliott's Legacy Lives On

In the face of continuing media interest in the story of Dr John Elliott and his wife Angelika, Dr Philip Nitschke accompanied Angelika for her appearance on 'Mornings with Kerri-Anne' on Channel 9 on Tuesday 8 May. In the interview Angelika talked once more of how the Dignitas process worked for her and John and of the trials and rewards of supporting her husband in his decision to put an end to his suffering.

Quite separately, Angelika and John's story also appeared in the 23 May edition in *That's Life* magazine where it was featured in a double spread.



Angelika & Philip with Kerri-Anne Kennerley

Exit Meetings & Workshops

Beginning in August in Perth, Exit will be holding a series of free public meetings followed by member-only workshops.

Perth - Tuesday 14 August (Workshop only)

Bunbury - Sat 18 August (Meeting/Workshop)

Hervey Bay - Wed 19 Sept (Meeting/Workshop)

Maroochydore - Mon 24 Sept (Meeting/Workshop)

Gold Coast - Friday 28 Sept (Meeting/Workshop)

Sydney - Friday 5 October (Meeting/Workshop)

Newcastle - Wed 3 October (Meeting/Workshop)

Invitations to workshops will be mailed to members in the local areas in early August as well as being advertised with bill posters and in the local and national press. Friends, family and the public are welcome to attend the public meetings. Further dates will be announced in the next edition of *Deliverance*.

Exitorial

Exit International is an organisation that has at its heart the provision of end of life information to rational elderly people as well as to those who are seriously ill. We acknowledge that while relatively few will actually end their lives early, most people draw enormous comfort from knowing that they have options should things 'turn bad'.

The pragmatism of our members drives Exit's organisational activities in every respect, from our workshop and public meeting program to our publishing and research and development program. In all these activities, Exit approaches what we do with serious consideration of the legal, social and ethical consequences of our actions. It is our pragmatic approach which sets us apart as an organisation.

Exit is proud of what we do, and how we do it. We are especially pleased that Australia's pre-eminent news and current affairs program *4 Corners* - used our organisation to highlight the state of play in Australia's end of life choices movement.

The activities depicted in *4 Corners* provide a remarkable, historical account of where the VE movement has headed a decade after the world's first Voluntary Euthanasia law was overturned by the Australian Parliament.

In going public on national TV, the people involved each made considered decisions, balancing the public's need to know, with their own personal need not to be caught up in the repressive laws on end of life issues to which we are all subject. These decisions were not taken lightly. As Director of Exit I am enormously impressed by these people's courage and conviction in standing up to a legal system that need to be challenged.

Looking forward, this month has seen Exit meet with lawyers to receive legal advice on our forthcoming purchase of the GC/MS laboratory equipment. This equipment will be nominally employed to test drugs that Exit members might have obtained years ago on prescription - legally - from their GPs. Other possible, legal uses are yet to be determined. We are confident the equipment will be operational by the end of the year. Watch this space for further

Philip Nitschke



Donate to Exit

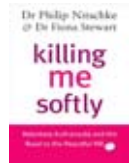
WBC	R	
WBC-G	KMS	
B	DVD	
C	OTHER	

Office Use Only

I want to donate (join/rejoin) to Exit (A\$100-150 is the average annual donation)

Exit Shop

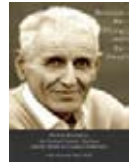
* **Killing Me Softly VE and the Road to the Peaceful Pill** A\$37
 (by Drs Philip Nitschke & Fiona Stewart) (includes postage within Australia)



* **The Peaceful Pill Handbook** (International edition)
 (Due to the banning of the PPH, the book is now only available at the on-line bookstore www.amazon.com (price US\$35 & ships same day))



* **Between the Dying & the Dead - Dr Jack Kevorkian, the Assisted Suicide Machine & the Battle to Legalise Euthanasia** A\$37
 (by Neal Nicol & Harry Wylie) (includes postage within Australia)



* **I Bequeath the Python** A\$15
 (by Elaine Arch-Rowe & Gordon Bell) (includes postage within Australia)



For all books' availability outside Australia, please contact the Exit office

Contact Details

First Name(s).....
 Last Name.....
 Address.....
Postcode.....
 eMail
 Age.....
 Telephone.....

Payment Options

I am giving \$
 on (today's date).....
 Visa Mastercard Cheque
 Credit Card No.....
 Name on Card.....
 Signature.....
 Expiry Date...../.....

Exit International
 PO Box 37781
 DARWIN NT 0821
 Australia
 Tel 1300 10 EXIT (3948)
 Outside Australia +64 4-293-6965 (NZ)
 Fax 02-8905-9249
 Email: contact@exitinternational.net