



# Graving Another Testament: A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Sydney Anglicans Under Peter Jensen 2001-2013

By Jonathan Foye

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## **Table of Contents**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	4
ABSTRACT .....	5
INTRODUCTION.....	6
CHAPTER ONE: THE JENSEN ASCENSION .....	45
CHAPTER TWO: THE POWERHOUSE—MOORE COLLEGE AND SYDNEY ANGLICAN DISCOURSE ...	65
CHAPTER THREE: PRISCILLA AND AQUILA—COMPLEMENTARIANISM AND GENDER ISSUES .....	83
CHAPTER FOUR: SYDNEY DIOCESE AND THE AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC SPHERE.....	112
CHAPTER FIVE: SYDNEY DIOCESE'S MEDIA RELATIONS .....	139
CHAPTER SIX: CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF PETER JENSEN'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS ...	156
CHAPTER SEVEN: THE JENSEN LEGACY .....	207
CONCLUSION.....	216
REFERENCES.....	219
NOTES.....	237

Statement of Authentication

The work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original except as acknowledged in the text. I hereby declare that I have not submitted this material, either in full or in part, for a degree at this or any other institution.

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## Abstract

*Graving Another Testament* examines the influential Sydney Diocese of the Anglican Church in Australia, particularly under the leadership of former Archbishop of Sydney Peter Jensen (2001-2013). This thesis argues that, despite his appeals to the need for church unity, the ‘Jensen ascension’ oversaw a decrease in the Sydney Diocese’s diversity of opinion, promulgating a conservative evangelicalism less open to other perspectives and more aggressive in its evangelistic focus. Through a consideration of Jensen’s speeches, media events and writings, *Graving Another Testament* examines Jensen’s dominant conservative evangelical discourse, particularly as it relates to opposition to same sex marriage and the ordination of women. It also considers the role the diocese has played in contemporary Australian politics, and explores how Australia’s secular media outlets covered issues related to Sydney Anglicanism. The thesis reveals Archbishop Jensen to be a powerful, charismatic church leader who led an ambitious but costly public ‘mission’ to gain ten per cent of Sydney’s population, which was funded with a highly risky investment strategy. It concludes by exploring the legacy Jensen has left for Sydney Diocese, and the possible future direction it may take following his July 2013 retirement.

## Introduction

*Lord, I have sung with ceaseless lips  
A tinker's litany of whips,  
Have graved another Testament  
On backs bowed down and bodies bent.*

Kenneth Slessor, 'The Vesper Song of the Reverend Samuel Marsden', 1939

Historical opinion on the Church of England's second chaplain to the colony of New South Wales, the Reverend Samuel Marsden, varies. In Australia he is renowned as a brutal 'flogging parson' who, while serving as a Parramatta Magistrate up until his unceremonious removal in 1822, inflicted unusually harsh punishments for even the most minor of infractions. A popular Australian saying concerning Marsden was that, "he sentences the prisoner on the Saturday, admonishes him on Sunday and flogs him on Monday" (Porter, 2006: 35). On the other hand, Marsden has a far gentler reputation in New Zealand. There he is remembered for his ministry to the Māori and widely regarded as having introduced sheep to the nation (Yarwood, 1996: xi).

When in Australia, Marsden's ministry focused on the geographical area presently known as the Sydney Diocese of the Anglican Church. Founded in 1847 out of the original Diocese of Australia (Judd and Cable, 2014: 86), it is an entity that, like Marsden, holds an ambiguous reputation. As one historian has put it:

*In many ways, Sydney is not a typical Anglican diocese, and over the years it has acquired a reputation as a stronghold of conservative evangelicalism —often maddening to its opponents but inspiring to its admirers, a light on the hill, a rock-like guardian of evangelical orthodoxy (Hilliard, 1997: 102).*

With some fifty per cent of Australia's Anglicans worshiping in the diocese (Hilliard, 1997: 102), Sydney's modern day Anglican Church is powerful, influential and, as was the case with Marsden himself, controversial. As the above Hilliard quote suggests, the relationship between the diocese and Sydney's broader society has arguably been characterised by an 'us and them' mentality. As former *Sydney Morning Herald* reporter Chris McGillion opined, "No other

subject in Australia's religious life today generates quite the same kind of intensely polarised public opinion as the complexion of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney" (2005: xi). Although never associated with any political party, Sydney Diocese's role in public affairs has had a long and engaged history. The church was active in opposing the decriminalisation of homosexuality and the first broadcast of the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras (Hilliard, 1997: 102), stances that have been echoed in diocesan leaders' more recent comments on same-sex marriage. Sydney's continuing refusal to join the majority of Australian dioceses in extending full ordination to women—limiting them to ministries that serve other women and children (Porter, 2006: 2)—is an equally contentious matter and these topics are the subject of much media coverage (Cummins, 2013; McKenny, 2011; Marr, 2008; Marr, 2009; Murphy, 2012; Rowbotham, 2007).<sup>1 2</sup>

As Muriel Porter wrote, "dioceses have cultures, like cities or political parties, parishes or schools. The cultures predate the current leaders and generally survive them" (2006: 7). Sydney's strand of Anglicanism locates itself within the Reformed tradition. With a theology rooted in the concept of propositional revelation, the dominant Sydney Anglican theology emphasises the intellectual aspects of Christianity over the emotional, liturgical or the pastoral (Hilliard, 1997: 103).<sup>3</sup> This theology includes an elevation of scripture as the inerrant Word of God, emphasis on the Penal Substitutionary model of the Atonement and—following a push to remove certain elements—a near-universally held 'low church' ecclesiology.<sup>4</sup> Sydney Anglican theology is developed, furthered and spread in significant measure by the influential Moore Theological College, which "produces more graduates each year than the diocese can employ" (McGillion, 2005: xv).

As David Marr wrote, "High titles and fancy clothes can confuse us into thinking Cardinal George Pell is the biggest figure Australia has on the world stage. In fact, it's Peter Jensen" (2008). This thesis argues that in his efforts to further entrench Sydney Diocese's particular conservative evangelical theology, Archbishop Jensen from 2001 until 2013, wielded authority in a manner that was as unrelenting and memorable as that of Samuel Marsden. Conservative and outspoken, Jensen often led his church into conflict where matters of principal were at stake. This was particularly evident when he helped form the Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON), an international breakaway group of conservative Anglicans opposed to the ordination of homosexual clergy. Jensen also stood out as a media prelate without peer, projecting his message clearly across a wide platform of popular sources. This thesis analyses

the broader discursive formation of Sydney Diocese alongside an examination of the specific rhetoric of Archbishop Jensen. Inevitably, given his position of power and influence, this thesis is concerned with how the former Archbishop drew on the tropes and frames of Sydney Anglican discourse while encoding and legitimising certain power relationships and his own authority.

Both Marsden and Jensen are iconic figures in Anglican Church history, having each engraved an indelible mark on the identity of Sydney Anglicanism and the public life of their respective eras. Much like the early Sydney chaplain, Jensen positioned his ministry in opposition to the permissiveness of broader society, further promulgating the 'us and them' mentality mentioned above. Whereas Marsden preached the need for order and personal morality against the social unrest and drunkenness found in the early colony of Sydney (Porter, 2006: 34-35), Jensen stood against same sex marriage in a city where the gay and lesbian community is "now larger than the number of churchgoing Anglicans" (Hilliard, 1997: 102).

As were views concerning his colonial predecessor, opinions regarding Jensen are polarised. Porter (2006: 7) noted that Jensen "in many ways seems to embody his diocese." Indeed, Jensen represented Sydney Diocese in such a symbiotic manner that he cannot be discussed in isolation from the broader institution he represented. Much like his diocese, the former Archbishop was revered by conservative evangelicals in Sydney and by members of likeminded dioceses in rural Australia and abroad. In such constituencies, he was held to be a heroic figure, fighting for biblical truth against those willing to compromise by capitulating to the mores of secular society. On the other hand, disgruntled theological moderates in Sydney (and others from the wider Church) viewed Jensen's episcopacy as a threat, regarding him as a narrow-minded individual seeking not only to exclude those who disagreed with him from the life of his diocese, but also seeking to spread his influence beyond its boundaries. As Marr suggests, Sydney's 'planting' churches within other dioceses was controversial, especially for Anglican churches already established in those areas. This practice was used to export 'Jensenism' into other parts of Australia, through 'independent' 'community' or 'evangelical' churches (Marr, 2008). Another aspect to the former Archbishop's influence beyond Sydney's borders is his aforementioned role in the GAFCON's formation. In undertaking this task, Jensen demonstrated his status as a renegade figure in the international church as he joined others in boycotting Lambeth, the Archbishop of Canterbury's gathering of Anglican leaders (Marr, 2008: 1). This thesis therefore deals with debates that have global ramifications.



Jensen's wielding of authority extended to his outright banning of individuals with whom his diocese disagreed. One of the more recent examples was Jensen's edict that the retired liberal Bishop of Newark, John Shelby Spong, was not to preach at Anglican churches during the Sydney leg of a book tour promoting *Jesus for the Non-Religious* (2007). Spong, perhaps the world's most (in)famous voice for liberal Christianity, described the ban as "an attempt to control thought." As Spong noted, "he does this every time I come" (Rowbotham, 2007: 5). Prominence does not guarantee that a theologian is welcome in Sydney Anglican circles. According to the retired Melbourne vicar The Reverend Kevin Giles, British evangelical scholar and former Bishop of Durham, Nigel Tom Wright, is also considered "*persona non grata*" in Sydney Diocese, partially because of his ideas (Giles, 2012).<sup>5</sup> Gene Robinson—the ninth Bishop of New Hampshire and the first openly gay person to be elected to the episcopate—is another figure whom is not welcome in the diocese. According to Porter, a senior Sydney Diocesan leader once commented that Robinson would not even be allowed to hand out hymn books in any Sydney parish (Porter, 2006: 136). Additional bans in the diocese include the withholding of ordination from gays and lesbians (Marr, 2008: 5).

Underpinning Jensen's ministry was a vision for Sydney that was characteristically bold. Following his 2001 election he launched the Mission, an ambitious pledge to have ten per cent of Sydney's population worshipping in "Bible-believing" churches within a decade (Porter, 2006: 9). Another campaign, Connect 09, was launched eight years later. It aimed to mobilise church lay people who were called upon, in Jensen's own words, to "contact every resident in our diocese with the word of God, in such a way that that person may connect with us and with the Lord Jesus" (Porter, 2011: 141). These campaigns were by no means the extent of Jensen's ambitions for change. During the 2010 General Synod the Archbishop also publicly complained that the national Anglican Church in Australia lacked vision and was in need of reform. He argued that "The church needed to bring together visionaries with fresh ideas about how to minister to people, not politicians from the various dioceses" and he claimed that he had suggested a new meeting to replace the Synod intended to facilitate this, but his proposal had failed to make sufficient headway (Zwartz, 2010: 3).

Pointedly, Jensen excluded Catholic, Uniting and all of the Orthodox Churches from his definition of 'Bible-believing' congregations that were counted as part of the Mission's target (Porter, 2006: 11). This blunt shift away from ecumenism signified the uncompromising

rhetorical style that defined so much of the former Archbishop's public utterances. As Jensen told ABC reporter Peter Crittenden in an interview shortly after his appointment, he believed his duty was "to be as clear and unambiguous as possible" (ABC Radio National, 2001). Jensen's speech was commonly punctuated by appeals to the authority of scripture and rhetorically self-sufficient (or 'clinching') arguments (Augoustinos, Lecouter, and Soyland, 2002: 110). While controversial, the former Archbishop's conservative reading of scripture was so ingrained within the Anglican Church that it was branded 'Jensenism.'

As indicated above, Jensen proved to be an outspoken public figurehead for Sydney Diocese, exercising his office's unique ability to further shape, promulgate and defend his church's 'message'. The former Archbishop garnered considerable exposure in many secular media outlets, weighing in as an opinion leader on a broad variety of social and political issues. As a result of the above controversies, Jensen faced the ire of opposing groups within the Anglican Church including the Movement for the Ordination of Women (MOW) and Anglicans Together. Yet, despite opposition to his vision for the church, Jensen remained resolute and uncompromising in his public statements until the end.

### **Aim of the Study**

Using the methodology of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), *Graving Another Testament* analyses the rhetoric of the dominant group of believers Jensen led in order to expose the rhetorical techniques this group used to shore up and garner support. The rhetorical and liturgical battles the Sydney Anglican leadership have been involved in are, therefore, explored in detail. The paradox already alluded to is another significant focal point: as is the case with its early chaplain Samuel Marsden and its former Archbishop, Sydney Diocese is as praised in as many circles as it is derided.

As suggested in the above introduction, *Graving Another Testament* seeks to examine and outline Sydney Anglican discourse. As is briefly adumbrated above—and explored by the thesis in detail—this discourse is shaped in significant measure by a particular strand of conservative evangelical theology, as well as opposition to recent cultural shifts in postmodern and post-feminist Australia. This places Sydney Diocese in opposition to the broader Australian society that it ministers to, which makes for a fascinating study of cultural dynamics.

Closely related to the above is *Graving Another Testament*'s study of the rhetoric of Archbishop Jensen. In particular, this study explores how the former Archbishop served to justify, sustain and legitimate his diocese's dominant theology. Significant examples of Jensen's Sydney Anglican rhetorical strategies included his previously observed hardline statements on the ordination of women and his public communication regarding homosexuality. While there is no doubt these stances were the result of genuine religious belief (and rigorous study) on Jensen's part, the exegetical and hermeneutical issues surrounding them are such that they are divisive issues among biblical scholars, and the former Archbishop's conservative views represent a group of dissenters in the global Anglican Communion. Determining just how Jensen convinced audiences that his particular version of biblical hermeneutics is worth considering over and against competing voices within the Anglican Communion—as well as how he responded to, anticipated, and in some cases, silenced his opponents—is one of this thesis' principal aims. Indeed, given Jensen's influence over Sydney Anglican discourse, such an examination is unavoidable.

*Graving Another Testament* also scrutinises the text and talk of other key members of the Sydney Diocese's hierarchy. These include Phillip Jensen, Peter's brother and the former Dean of St. Andrew's Cathedral—the mother church of Sydney Diocese—and the Director of the Ministry Training and Development program (MT&D). It also includes Jensen's assistant bishops, including the prominent Bishop for South Sydney—and former candidate for the office of Archbishop—Rob Forsyth. In the same manner as Porter, *Graving Another Testament* uses the term 'Sydney Anglicans' as shorthand for the dominant, conservative culture that exists amongst Sydney Diocese, including its Synod, the Synod standing committee, theologians and the majority of its clergy (2006: 8). Arguments deployed by opponents of this theology are another focal point for analysis. Particular attention is given to the small minority of dissident groups active within Sydney Diocese. Known in Nancy Fraser's parlance as "subaltern counter publics" (1990: 67), these small groups seek to ignite and engage in the aforementioned identity debates, even where their opposition is powerful and widespread. As Fraser wrote, "[M]embers of subordinated social groups—women, workers, people of color (sic), and gays and lesbians—have repeatedly found it advantageous to constitute alternative publics...[and] parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counter-discourses, which in turn permit them to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities and needs" (1990: 67). There are a multitude of channels for participation in these counterpublics. For example, Fraser cites the late twentieth century feminist movement in the United States, with its

network of publications, research centers, bookstores, conferences, and local meeting places. (1990: 67). In the case of the thesis at hand, counterpublics that are analysed include the MOW and Anglicans Together, who each have their own meetings, conferences journals, books and other distinct modes of organisation.

Finally, this thesis examines Australia's media coverage regarding Sydney Diocese in terms of how it has presented the church and whether it has carried or challenged the church's message. As is outlined further below in 'Significance of the research', Australia's secular media play an important role in drawing attention to contentious issues. This thesis argues that this has occurred despite a dearth of journalists with theological expertise. The analysis of religious speech and writing is not always media professionals' domain, as many lack the theological knowledge and rhetorical training to approach complex and controversial topics in a nuanced way. *Graving Another Testament* investigates their efforts to carry out this task.

Outlining the personal biases and background that inform and underpin work is an essential part of any study and there are a number of points worth outlining here. This thesis does not generally adopt first-person perspective, however here it is necessary. It is in the interests of transparency that I note that I am not myself a Sydney Anglican. Although I was christened in that tradition, and have since worshipped at a number of Sydney Anglican congregations, my present faith trajectory is informed by my ongoing membership of the Uniting Church in Australia (UCA), into which I was confirmed in 2001. I have worked for the UCA as a communications coordinator, university chaplaincy associate (or mission worker) and layperson. Furthermore, my wife Sarah is from a Sydney Anglican background, and has on occasion provided me with insights that could only be gained from her years of active parish membership. These aspects of my biography ensure that I cannot claim to be disinterested or objective, and directly brings to bear a particular theological framework that informs my work. Like many others in my faith, I am a passionate supporter of the ordination of women to all ministries, and work towards seeing the church fully embrace gay and lesbian members as part of its life. In writing *Graving Another Testament* I intend to offer support and solidarity to those Sydney Anglicans working towards these causes within their own denomination by way of critically analysing a number of arguments that are used to prevent or stifle these outcomes. As this might suggest, I view my personal Christian faith as being the locus for a number of concerns for social justice. It is perhaps natural that I have gravitated towards CDA as a methodology and that I have drawn upon its analyses in my earlier work. The first of these was my honours thesis

*Visions and Revisions: A Media Analysis of Reconciliation Rhetoric (1992-2008)*, which examines the competing versions of reconciliation discourse drawn upon by Australian Prime Ministers Keating, Howard, and Rudd. Another was a paper co-authored with Paul Ryder entitled ‘Cries from Babylon’ (2011), which drew upon the tools of CDA to analyse Australian political discourse regarding asylum seekers. The thesis’ CDA therefore follows on from these prior works, after I have had the opportunity to further hone its use. This thesis is not intended to be the ‘final word’ on any of the topics it seeks to address (such an undertaking would surely be impossible!) but, rather, is intended to contribute to ongoing discussions regarding Sydney Diocese and its place within Australian culture. As such, in the spirit of openness of inquiry and pluralism, it is offered up for critique, and readers are invited to correspond regarding its analyses and conclusions. This study is intended to contribute to and enhance the quality of debate surrounding the cultural nature and societal role of Sydney Anglicans. As such, its findings are of particular interest to media analysts, journalists, public relations professionals, religious affairs commentators, and systematic theologians.

### **Significance of the research**

*Graving Another Testament* engages with subjects of high significance.

First, this thesis’ focus on Peter Jensen’s rhetoric is significant because, as already noted, the former Sydney Archbishop has long been an active and influential figure, not only within the Anglican Church but also within the field of Australian public affairs in general. He was an energetic commentator on social and political issues, ranging from embryonic stem cell research to industrial relations. His contributions included opinion columns for the *Sydney Morning Herald* and essays for the cultural magazine *The Monthly*. Jensen’s Boyer lectures, entitled *The Future of Jesus* (2006), were broadcast on ABC Radio National. These and other contributions are demonstrative of Jensen’s large audience and considerable cachet. Retired High Court Justice Michael Kirby recognised this influence in a November 2007 interview, when he said that the Anglican Archbishop had hindered the acceptance of gays and lesbians in Australian society. The then-judge said that homophobia was “reinforced even to this day by religious instruction...from the two archbishops of Sydney” (Attard, 2007a). This was a startling comment, not only because it was made by Kirby, who also went on record elsewhere calling Jensen “a friend” and “a great scholar of Anglican church history” (Callaghan, 2011), but also because of the statement’s major implications. If Kirby’s claim that Jensen contributed to the

continuing existence of homophobia is correct, the latter left an indelible mark on Australia's public theology and culture. As the thesis analyses his rhetoric, its findings are of relevance not only for their consideration of Anglican Church life, but also for their implications for the Australian body politic.

Second, *Graving Another Testament* deals with the topic of a growing gulf within the global Anglican Communion. Given this institution's stature as the world's fourth largest Christian communion in the world, this division is a topic of much significance. Since the 2 November 2003 consecration of Gene Robinson, the world's first openly gay bishop, this communion has divided in such a dramatic fashion that some commentators have deemed the likelihood of its future survival to be "an open question" (Radner and Turner, 2006: 3). Changes within the communion saw some dioceses become more accommodating of gays and lesbians. These proved scandalous for Anglicans in the developing world, some of whom opted to break communion (Radner and Turner, 2006: 3). That the church did not divide in such a manner over issues such as divorce, the ordination of women to the priesthood (and the consecration of some women Bishops) and evolution demonstrates the sexuality debate's unique volatility (Marr, 2008: 1). Sydney Diocese has been an active participant in this controversy through its already-mentioned representation in GAFCON, with some commentators going as far as describing this involvement in antagonistic terms. For example, Porter wrote, "there is a distinct likelihood of a devastating shattering of the Anglican Communion over this issue, and Sydney Diocese is playing a leading role in that scenario" (2006: 118). Whether this is true or not remains to be seen. Nevertheless, the fact that Sydney plays such a contentious role in the broader politics of the Anglican Church demonstrates that *Graving Another Testament's* focus is of international import.

Finally, as this thesis explores the manner in which journalists and commentators have 'covered' the Sydney Anglicans, it inevitably illuminates media competence. As agenda setting theory holds, media outlets have much ability to contribute and shape public debates by presenting them to a wider audience of readers or viewers. According to this theory, "media make [publics] aware of the issues, but do not tell them how to think or feel about the issues" (Heath, 2005: 23). Applying this concept to contemporary church debates, the secular media play a crucial role in ensuring that wider secular publics are informed of issues that might otherwise garner less attention. For example, as Gill observes, media reporting of the debate surrounding the ordination of women reporting devoted to the issue has had the effect of essentially

“popularising what might otherwise appear to be somewhat arcane academic disputes” (Gill, 1994: 233). In light of this, *Graving Another Testament* interrogates whether or not Australia’s journalists and commentators sufficiently held Archbishop Peter Jensen and other Sydney Diocese leaders to account. Unlike the Pope—who occasionally issues *ex cathedra* statements considered by the Vatican to be infallible—the Archbishop of Canterbury is a prelate whose position in the Global Anglican Communion is “first among equals” (Porter, 2006: 4). As a result, the Bishop or Archbishop responsible for a given geographic area known as a diocese is a figure of considerable influence. As well as holding certain privileges of office such as the ability to ordain, an Archbishop has considerable capacity to shape their diocese’s theology. This influence is not only due to the considerable traditional and institutional cachet of the office of Archbishop but also with the ability to veto church legislation (McGillion, 2005: 48).<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, such scrutiny is a necessary aspect of the diocese’s efforts to engage the wider community and evangelism programs. As Mascord observed, “A church seeking to commend itself to the wider community needs to be transparent and open to critique” (2012, 161). The ability of Australia’s media outlets to provide such transparency (or, perhaps, the lack of such an ability) is a topic that has been taken up by many analysts (Doogue, 2006; Hassan, 2006; Maddox, 2005). *Graving Another Testament*’s media analysis assesses how Australia’s media outlets fare with regards to religious affairs reporting: an important task for the above reasons.

### **Conceptual basis**

Sydney Diocese has long been a point of fascination for journalists, theologians, and academics in the humanities. As the literature review at the end of this chapter demonstrates, there has been no shortage of analysts willing to offer their insights on the theological, ecclesiological and liturgical debates with which this particular church has long engaged. Where the study at hand is unique, however, lies in how it analyses these debates from a communications perspective; that is, it examines *how* highly contentious cultural and theological stances are framed, articulated and justified through rhetorical techniques and how these are leveraged to gain support (and, at points where it is needed, assent). Given the central role these concepts of rhetoric and framing play in the goals and aims of this thesis, it is necessary to explore them here.

The study of rhetoric is one with a long history. The rich oratorical culture of Ancient Greece gave rise to rhetoric as a subject of formal study, with Aristotle being among the first to describe and categorise the methods speakers may use to persuade (trans. in Rhys Roberts, 2004).

Included in his categories of persuasion are techniques of inductive and deductive reasoning, the influence of the speaker's reputation for truthfulness and ethical behaviour, the moral standards and norms of the audience and the effects of emotional and ethical appeals on the audience. In summary, these are the classical oratorical virtues of logos, ethos and pathos (Ryder, 2010: 9). Following this ancient tradition, the Formalist and New Critics of the 1920s sought a more 'scientific' and exacting way of approaching texts. This would primarily focus on how texts were constructed. For the Formalists and for the New Critics there would be an interest in the referent power of language. Work of the Formalists, New Critics and later the Structuralists gave rise to a contemporary focus on modes of vocal delivery, language or vocabulary techniques, paralinguistic (or non vocal) techniques and structural techniques (Ryder, 2009: 6). In a context whereby "when we think of politics these days we think of spin" (Watson, 2012: 12) the past decade has witnessed resurgence in the study of rhetoric. As King has noted: "Not since the sixteenth century have there been so many scholars engaged in rhetorical criticism" (2006: 328).

Related to this growth in interest in rhetorical formation is the concept of 'spin', or 'framing'. First appearing in a *New York Times* editorial regarding President Reagan's re-election campaign (1984), the term 'spin' initially referred to misleading or unethical practices of political consultants (*The New York Times*, 21 October 1984). It has since come to take on broader significance, "to describe any effort by an individual or organisation to interpret an event or issue from a particular viewpoint" (Wilcox and Cameron, 2014: 11). A similar, more academic term for spin is 'framing'.

## **Discourse**

As *Graving Another Testament* interrogates notions of 'discourse' this complex concept must also be defined and discussed. For the purposes of this study, 'discourse' is defined in James Paul Gee's words as:

*A socially accepted association among ways of using language, of thinking and of acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or 'social network' (1991: 3).*

In terms of its ability to constitute and affect behaviour, discourse may be thought of "as an "identity kit" which comes complete with the appropriate costume and instructions on how to act



and talk so as to take on a particular role that others will recognize (sic)” (Gee, 1991: 3). For example, Gee outlines how his own admission into the discourse of linguistics taught him to “think, speak and act like a linguist” (1991: 3). Discourses are ideological as they involve a particular set of values or viewpoints (Gee, 1991: 4) Discourses hold sway over their adherents, whose involvement is predicated on the basis that they speak and act in a particular way recognisable to others as belonging to that discourse (Gee, 1991: 4). In Gee’s understanding, discourses are resistant to internal scrutiny or self-criticism. That is, discourses themselves define what may and may not be considered acceptable criticism. An individual cannot be part of a particular discourse while providing any argument that seriously undermines it; as such an action defines one as an outsider (Gee, 1991: 4).

Applying this understanding of ‘discourse’ to the thesis at hand, *Graving Another Testament* explores Sydney Anglican discourse in terms of its expectations for how adherents are to act, to speak, and significantly, what is acceptable for them to believe. Sydney Anglicans self-identify as ‘evangelicals’. This term, which comes from the Koine Greek word *evangelion* or gospel (Tomlinson, 1995: 5), could, strictly speaking, apply to all Christian churches that seek to evangelise, or spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is more commonly used to name a particular movement that dates back to the Reformation when it was used to describe Protestantism, especially the Lutheran wing (Tomlinson, 1995: 5). ‘Evangelical’ refers to those who “place special stress on conversion and salvation through faith in the atoning death of Christ” (Cross and Livingston, 1997: 50, cited in Porter, 2006: 39). On first glance ‘evangelical’ is an ambiguous term applied to a broad range of Christians. United Theological College lecturer in New Testament Studies, Jeff Aernie, has previously spoken to this ambiguity, opining, “I still have no idea about what that (term) means in Australia” (J. Aernie, personal communication, 9 July 2012). In their use of the term, Sydney Anglicans signify what distinguishes their diocese from those of a more moderate or liberal theology as well as those of an Anglo-Catholic approach. For Sydney Anglicans, ‘evangelical’ is a positive term of self-identification that denotes right belief and ‘Bible based’ theology (in much the same way liberal Christians positively self identify as ‘progressive’). This identification of Sydney as an evangelical diocese comes with what might be deemed a certain parochial, even separatist approach to the relationship with other dioceses. Since 1909 the Anglican Church League has tasked itself with defending the diocese’s conservative evangelical character against liberal and Anglo Catholic influences (McGillion, 2005: 23). Former League president Bruce Ballantine-Jones articulated

this: “In Sydney, we’re pretty well protected from the liberal-dominated Anglican Church of Australia, which is clapped out and dying” (McGillion, 2005: 9).

## **Power**

With Gee’s understanding of discourse in mind, it must be noted that there are a number of scholarly perspectives surrounding the related concept of power. Some of these popular, competing viewpoints are sketched below.

Some theorists have analysed power in purely descriptive ways. Far from Lord Byron’s warning about power’s corrupting influence, these theorists explored power as something merely to be understood. For example, French and Raven (1959) outlined their concept of the five sources of power (reward, coercive, legitimate, referent and expert) without suggesting that this power is benevolent (or for that matter, benign). More optimistically, Parsons defined ‘power’ in similar terms to money: as a “positive social capacity to achieve communal ends” (cited in Abercrombie, Hill and Turner, 2006: 305). Used in this way, the term ‘power’ is interchangeable with ‘influence’ (Abercrombie, Hill and Turner, 2006: 305). Another theorist who thought of power along similar lines was Dahl, who described power in terms of an individual’s ability to influence and change others’ behaviour (1970, cited in Abercrombie, Hill and Turner, 2006: 305). Given this definition, Dahl believed that power is distributed widely throughout society rather than concentrated within ruling elite groups.

In stark contrast to these ‘optimistic’ views, other theorists have viewed power in terms of the ‘dominance’ of particular groups in society. One key theorist amongst this grouping is the Italian political theorist and activist Antonio Gramsci. An active member of the Communist Party, Gramsci was imprisoned for a decade by Mussolini (Abercrombie, Hill and Turner, 2006: 180). He developed the concept of ‘hegemony’—an abovementioned term that emerges from the writings of Karl Marx and refers to the dominance of certain groups over one class by another. In Gramsci’s understanding, while coercion is a powerful force, ideology is even more important in gaining the consent of dominated classes (Abercrombie, Hill and Turner, 2006: 180). Over time, Gramsci came to the understanding that—because it was not natural, but rather organised— hegemony could be resisted and supplanted. As such ‘counterhegemony’ as a practice seeks to analyse, critique, and thereby dismantle hegemonic power.

Also worth considering are the contributions of Pierre Bourdieu, the French sociologist and philosopher who developed the concept of ‘habitus’ which he defined as “a set of deeply interiorized (sic) master-patterns...(which) may govern and regulate mental processes without being consciously apprehended or controlled” (1971: 192—193). ‘Habitus’ refers to a particular culture’s pattern of habitual interaction. Bourdieu argued that the habitus of certain powerful groups within society is dominant over others. For example, according to Bourdieu, the education system rewards students who possess high-class habitus:

*By doing away with giving explicitly to everyone what it implicitly demands of everyone, the education system demands of everyone alike that they have what it does not give. This consists mainly of linguistic and social competence and that relationship of familiarity with culture, which can only be produced by family upbringing when it transmits the dominant culture (1977: 494, cited in Sullivan, 2002: 144).*

In a similar manner, linguist Teun A. van Dijk referred to the notion of ‘social power’, which he defined in terms of “privileged access” to particular resources, including wealth, position, group membership, education and knowledge, among other things (1993: 254). Van Dijk used the term ‘dominance’ to define the relationship between those who possess this power over those who do not (and are denied access) (1993: 255). Often such power relationships are unquestioned and given ‘natural’ status until demonstrated to be otherwise. In such cases, dominant groups’ ways of thinking are presented as common sense and inevitable, a phenomena which Fairclough described as “naturalisation” (1992). Historically, this was the case with unquestioned power relationships such as men over women, white people over blacks and rich over poor (Van Dijk, 2003: 255). Rarely, however, is such dominance totalising, because it is restricted to specific domains and challenged by what may be deemed ‘counter-power’ (Van Dijk, 1993: 255).

Van Dijk’s argument that power is not just unilaterally imposed on particular groups is of importance to the analysis of power that *Graving Another Testament* carries out. He wrote that “power, and even power abuse, may seem ‘jointly produced’, e.g. when dominated groups are persuaded, by whatever means, that dominance is ‘natural’ or otherwise legitimate” (Van Dijk, 1993: 250). Van Dijk has argued that the purpose of dominant groups’ discourse is to convince subjugated groups of precisely this ‘naturalness’ and to gain their approval of this state of affairs (1993: 256). That is, to “manufacture consent” (Chomsky and Herman, 1988, cited in Van Dijk,

1993: 255). In regards to these concepts of power, *Graving Another Testament* considers the extent to which a particular dominant Sydney Anglican discourse serves to gain the assent of church members which, in turn, arguably results in the subjugation of women, and the marginalisation of gays and lesbians within the diocese.

The work of historian and philosopher Michel Foucault also forms much of the theoretical basis for *Graving Another Testament's* study into the above-noted link between discourse and power. Foucault was especially influential in expounding the concept that discourse constructs identity, social environments and “subjectivity;” that is, the way the individuals view themselves in their social environment. ‘Discourse’, in Foucault’s use of the term, defines and produces the way that a topic could be meaningfully discussed, and therefore how particular forms of knowledge can be used to control the conduct of others (1977: 28). Foucault believed that knowledge and power are so intertwined that “there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time, power relations” (1977: 28). Put differently, as part of their social function discourses close off possibilities and rule out alternative ways of thinking and therefore preserve a particular distribution of power (Dimitrov, 2008: 1). Relevant to any study of discourse, the concept of discursive formations was also developed by Foucault. This refers to discursive events that share the same style, support a strategy and belong to a common institutional, administrative or political drift and pattern (Cousins and Hussain, 1984: 84-85).

Having outlined the broader theoretical basis for an analysis of discourse and power relations, it is possible to consider these concepts in relation to Sydney Diocese and its ministry. A major trope in this thesis is the comparison between former Archbishop Peter Jensen’s wielding and enforcement of power in Sydney Diocese to that of colonial chaplain Samuel Marsden. Unlike Marsden, Jensen never ordered any floggings. He did, however, grave another testament, but in a different sense. He rhetorically beat those with whom he disagreed, claiming that they did not faithfully interpret scripture in the ‘Bible-based’ way of his diocese. He also used his prerogatives as Archbishop to enforce Sydney’s long-held conservative evangelical theology, at points even banning certain figures from his diocese, as is in the example of John Shelby Spong’s 2007 ban. While the former Bishop of Newark’s labeling of this move as mind control was overly dramatic, this description does point towards the way that Jensen has ensured a particular theology was projected from Sydney’s pulpits to its pews (Rowbotham, 2007: 5). Of course, there are other perspectives within Sydney Diocese that are not in keeping with this

theology and, interestingly enough, Jensen sometimes described his diocese as being a broad church. In a *Compass* documentary, Jensen said:

*I am the Archbishop of everyone in the diocese. I am not the Archbishop of a sectional group, and I rejoice in the variety of our diocese and am very happy to serve people who think differently from me on all sorts of things in any way I can* (Doogue, 2009).

This appeal to diversity gave the impression Jensen was primarily accommodating. This representation of the former Archbishop as a figure welcoming and celebrating difference seems convincing at first: an impression ostensibly reinforced by a cursory glance over other aspects of his ministry. For example, in his 2002 address to Synod, Jensen told the gathering of congregation representatives “we are a fellowship of churches, not an army with an episcopal general, and you must feel free to choose your own path of obedience to Christ” (Jensen, 2002, cited in Porter, 2006: 29). Furthermore, Jensen maintained a lengthy correspondence with Kirby; the latter declared that he believed the former Archbishop would be “distressed” were he to leave the church (Attard, 2007b). Finally, as part of his emphasis on the importance of congregations, Jensen controversially pushed for lay presidency. If instituted this would allow for congregation members who are not ordained to carry out the central Anglican rite of Holy Communion, an innovation that might at first appear to be democratic and anti-hierarchical (Porter 2006: 49—50). It is worth examining some of these considerations in more detail. Starting in reverse order with the example of lay presidency, as Porter has observed, rather than being the result of a grassroots campaign for equity, the suggested policy was pushed by the Archbishop, an upper member of Sydney Diocese’s hierarchy (2006: 50). Furthermore, Jensen’s *Compass* interview statement is perhaps best interpreted alongside another interview answer that immediately followed it:

*I don’t doubt that I have strong convictions and that I stand for those strong convictions. Now if you go to any Anglican diocese in the world you will find that the bishop has certain strong convictions and he will stand for those and will pursue them **because he is after all the Archbishop or the Bishop*** (Doogue, 2009, emphasis added).

Jensen seemed willing to appeal to the diversity of those within his church, yet he maintained his prerogative to overrule them on matters of conviction. This quote is also interesting for its appeal to the authority of “the Archbishop or the Bishop” which, it would seem, trumped the celebration of diocesan variety. As this example shows, tracing Sydney Anglican discourse, vis-à-vis how Jensen subtly encoded power, is a complex task. The methodology of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is drawn upon as the main toolset for this task. CDA incorporates theories of power and discourse, (such as those offered by Foucault) in close readings of text and speech. Originally emerging in the 1980s as a departure from the purely descriptive goals of discourse analysis (Aldrich et al, 2007: 127), CDA scrutinises the words speechwriters, journalists and speakers select from the available options at their disposal when they write or speak (Matheson, 2005: 20). It especially focuses on the codification and exercise of power and on the principle of ‘dominance’ in society as it is enacted, sustained, legitimated, or challenged by talk or text (Van Dijk, 1994: 435). In many cases, this involves uncovering how particular frames are drawn upon in order to ‘swaddle’ or cover over what might be considered offensive or illiberal arguments. For example, Van Dijk (2000) investigated how, unlike traditional obvious racism, New Racism in western nations works by presenting minorities as stigmatised ‘others’. In this environment, Van Dijk found that news outlets serve to reinforce racial stereotypes, “[W]hat we find is a preference for those topics that emphasize (sic). Their bad actions and Our (sic) good ones” (2000: 39).

More detailed information regarding *Graving Another Testament*’s CDA is included in Chapter Six’s Methodology section, which precedes a CDA of Peter Jensen’s inaugural presidential address before the October 2001 Synod meeting. While this portion of Chapter Six is the first section to incorporate this methodology in a detailed line-by-line fashion, the other chapters also draw upon the tools of CDA.

In addition to CDA, this thesis also draws upon a number of interviews that were conducted with individuals who have experience or expertise regarding the Sydney Diocese. Noteworthy participants include former High Court Judge Justice Michael Kirby, journalist and commentator Muriel Porter, former Moore College lecturer and author Keith Mascord, and the Director of the St. James Ethics Centre Simon Longstaff.

## Chapter Overview

*Graving Another Testament* contains nine discrete chapters, including the introduction. While each of these explores a unique topic related to the dominant discourse of the Sydney Diocese, as is acknowledged throughout, a certain degree of overlap is unavoidable, and as such some analysis is repeated where this is deemed to be necessary. The order of these chapters serves to enable the thesis' analysis and narrative structure: Chapters One through to Five explore the Sydney Diocese and Archbishop Jensen's ascension to the role of Archbishop. This broader analysis serves to lay the groundwork for Chapter Six, which contains an original contribution to debates surrounding Sydney Diocese: a CDA into Archbishop Jensen's seminal presidential address before the October 2001 Synod meeting.

Chapter One focuses on the 2001 election of Peter Jensen to the role of Archbishop as well as outlining his past role as principal of Moore Theological College. This chapter provides a more detailed exploration of Jensen's rhetorical style introduced earlier in this introduction. A slightly smaller, stand-alone section at the end of this chapter covers Peter's younger brother, Phillip, previously acknowledged as the former Dean of Sydney's St Andrew's Cathedral and Director of the MT&D. From his earlier days as the Anglican Chaplain for the University of New South Wales (UNSW) to his role as Dean, Phillip Jensen was arguably as influential as his older brother, both within Sydney Diocese and beyond. Given the younger Jensen's profile, this analysis is indispensable to this thesis' aims.

Chapter Two examines the influence of Moore College, the diocese's influential theological institution. One significant reason for this institution's standing is that it is mandatory for prospective clergy to study there if they are to be appointed in Sydney. The chapter explores the college's role in shaping the conservative evangelical theology predominant in Sydney Diocese, and critically analyses its contributions to contemporary theological debates.

Chapter Three explores church gender debates, including the place of women in Sydney Diocese and the status of gays and lesbians. As has already been discussed, various campaigns have been waged on women's issues by opposing factions such as the Sydney anti-women's-ordination group Equal But Different, which was formed as a response to the Movement for the Ordination of Women. The chapter explores the Sydney Diocese's predominant, binary understanding of gender, informed as it is through the theological concept of complementarianism. The chapter

also examines how this binary understanding informs rhetoric and stances regarding homosexuality, such as the earlier-mentioned opposition to the legalisation of homosexuality in New South Wales. As the chapter highlights, these twin gender issues are of international import, and seemingly defined a changing, and on occasion, hostile relationship between the Sydney Diocese and the broader Anglican Communion.

Chapter Four is devoted to Sydney Diocese's engagement in the broader Australian body politic. This chapter outlines Archbishop Jensen's public political stances, which covered a wide variety of political topics ranging from industrial relations to gay marriage. Of particular interest to the chapter is the Sydney Anglicans' opposition to—and campaign against—non-scripture ethics classes in New South Wales' public schools.

Chapter Five analyses media coverage of some events involving Sydney Anglicans. The specific texts included in this chapter are comprised of both the Sydney Anglicans' own publications and texts from secular outlets. The chapter also outlines Archbishop Jensen's prodigious communication skills and unparalleled media cachet, with a view to a particular paradox; while many secular media commentators were critical of the former Archbishop, they nonetheless served to raise his public profile.

Building on the analyses of rhetoric examined in Chapters One through Five, Chapter Six is a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of Jensen's presidential address at the October 2001 Synod meeting and *Graving Another Testament's* most significant contribution to debates surrounding the Sydney Diocese. As it was his first major public speech as Archbishop, this address lends itself to a fascinating study of how Jensen wished to define his episcopate, in his own words. As chapters One through to Five cover a number of complex and seemingly disparate issues—including sexuality, politics, and the training of clergy—an analysis of Jensen's inaugural address is enriched by their conclusions.

Chapter Seven serves to round off the thesis' exploration of Jensen's episcopate with a brief CDA of his presidential address at the 2012 Synod meeting, his last as Archbishop. Having explored the former Archbishop's recent legacy, the chapter turns to the subject of his successor, Archbishop Glenn Davies. Elected on 6 August 2013, Davies is following in the footsteps of a leader of great stature who cast a long shadow over his diocese and far beyond.



Finally, the Conclusion ties together the threads explored throughout the thesis and presents key findings. It charts the overall terrain of the thesis, with a view towards the diocese's future, and fertile grounds for further research.

Before proceeding into the next chapter's examination of Jensen's rise, it is necessary to chart some of the existing literature surrounding Sydney Diocese. In considering the Sydney Diocese from a variety of different angles, disciplines, and viewpoints, these sources have all been instrumental in informing the thesis' objectives and analyses.

### **Review of Key Literature**

Several commentators have weighed in on the origins and nature of religious conservatism and fundamentalism within the worldwide church in general, and the Sydney Diocese of the Anglican Church specifically. As a number of significant works are examined in detail in later chapters, these have been omitted from the literature review to avoid unnecessary duplication. To start with an obvious example, material written by Peter Jensen such as speeches and opinion pieces are the basis of much of this thesis' Critical Discourse Analysis and are better analysed in the context provided by their respective chapters. Similarly, Phillip Jensen's books and ministry resources—including the ubiquitous *Two Ways To Live* (2003) tract—are critically analysed in Chapter One rather than the literature review. Chapter Two's discussion of gender issues draws on the work of a wide range of theologians and exegetes whose works better serve the value of that chapter by building the broader context for Sydney Diocese's conservative evangelical conclusions on these issues. Finally, a number of sources are dealt with in Chapter Five's analysis of how Australia's secular media depicted Archbishop Jensen's episcopate and for the most part, these do not appear in the literature review. Despite these deliberate omissions, this review situates the thesis at hand within the broader context of works about the diocese, with an eye to some of the sources that inform it.

One of the seminal texts with regards to analysing the Sydney Anglicans originated within the diocese itself. Written by Stephen Judd and Kenneth Cable, *Sydney Anglicans* (2014) was commissioned in 1984 by the Standing Committee of the Synod (2014: 1). The book was intended to fill a gap. Prior to its first publication in 1987 there had been no history of the diocese, and only three of its nine bishops had been the subjects of biographical studies.<sup>7</sup> *Sydney Anglicans* charts the growth and development of Sydney Anglicanism from its 'pre-history'

when the Church of England was part of the early penal colony before Sydney Diocese's 1847 foundation to the 1980s.

Judd and Cable's work is detailed and methodical, providing some significant points of information (the appendix includes a complete list of clergy and deaconesses licensed in the Diocese of Sydney from 1847 to 1986). Given its origins as a diocese-commissioned work, it might be expected that *Sydney Anglicans* functions as an 'official' history, a point that Porter took up when she wrote that the Sydney Diocese's Standing Committee, the source of the book's funding, "inevitably seems to have bred a degree of caution in the work" (2006: 164). One example of the authors' cautious approach is their treatment of Samuel Marsden. As noted, Marsden's reputation is, at best, ambiguous, with many (including the poet Kenneth Slessor, provider of *Graving Another Testament's* epigraph) representing the colonial chaplain as a brutal 'flogging parson'. While noting the fact that "secular historians have usually been critical of Marsden" and that "most Anglican works have treated him favourably" (Judd and Cable, 2014: 333, Figure 9), the book does not include an impression of Marsden developed by the authors. Instead, Judd and Cable account for Marsden's approach as the result of the harsh colony to which he was expected to minister, and his ministry to the Maori rather than Australia's indigenous groups as their willingness to conform to "European work and cultural patterns" (Judd and Cable, 2014: 131). That the authors choose to focus on providing historical context for Marsden, rather than weighing in on the virtue of his ministry, is demonstrative of an historical approach that avoids controversy or provocation. As such, while *Sydney Anglicans* is a useful source that plots the development of Sydney Diocese, it avoids the analysis of the diocese's power structures that *Graving Another Testament* seeks to undertake.

Another key work by a Sydney Diocese insider is William Lawton's historical account *The Better Time To Be: Utopian Attitudes to Society Among Sydney Anglicans 1885 to 1914* (1990). This book, started out as Lawton's PhD thesis, which he submitted in 1985. It responds to what he perceived to be a lack of attention given to Sydney Anglicanism as a unique social and political force during the years preceding the first World War. Lawton draws on a variety of hitherto unused sources from private collections around the diocese. He traces much of the shape of modern Anglicanism to this period of social upheaval. In particular, Lawton traces Sydney's emphasis on the 'gathered community' or 'Little Flock' of believers—an elect group distinct and set apart from the rest of the world—to the preaching of Irish evangelist G C Grubb and the contributions of Moore College principal Nathaniel Jones (1990: 2). While emanating from

different traditions, Grubb from Welsh revivalism and Jones from Plymouth Bretherenism, Lawton argues that these figures shared, and imparted, a commitment to millennial eschatology and an emphasis on the inner life of believers (1990: 2).

*The Better Time To Be* argues that during the years from 1885 to 1914 Sydney's Evangelicals were a "volatile and energetic faction within the [Anglican] denomination" (Lawton, 1990: 1). Politically, this group responded to growing skepticism and rationalism by calling society back to its Christian heritage, and entering fundamental debates over prostitution, gambling, family planning, and the use of Sunday (Lawton, 1990: 8-9). "The Anglican leadership", according to Lawton, "had a distinctive viewpoint on marriage and divorce and on Sunday observance and used its prestige and influence to abort legal change" (Lawton, 1990: 9).

*The Better Time To Be* was written by a Sydney Anglican insider, with Lawton holding such posts as the Rector of East Sydney and the Dean of Students at Moore Theological College (he also thanks Peter Jensen in his acknowledgements). Despite this, the book's analysis is frank and unrestrained. It does not seek to portray the diocese in an overly positive light and it draws on a previously untapped wealth of historical materials in order to focus on a relatively unknown period in Sydney Church history. As such, it accounts for much of the early development of the Sydney Anglican discourse that *Graving Another Testament* seeks to analyse, albeit without explicit reference to discourse as a subject matter.

Another work that sheds considerable light on the history of Sydney Diocese is Marcia Cameron's *An Enigmatic Life* (2006). Arguably the most extensive biography of the influential Sydney Anglican theologian David Broughton Knox, this work covers his twenty-six years (1959-1985) as Principal of Moore College. The book is subtitled *Father of Contemporary Sydney Anglicanism*. As this suggests, Knox's ongoing influence on the diocese is far-reaching. During his tenure, he trained over one thousand students. He also wrote the college's curriculum (Cameron, 2006: b.c). More than these achievements, Knox is remembered as the originator of Sydney's focus on local congregations over the needs of the national church, for developing the concept of 'propositional' revelation (which holds that the revelation of God lies in the Bible's words about God) (Cameron, 2006: 209-210), and for his strident opposition to the decriminalisation of homosexuality in New South Wales (Cameron, 2006: 216).

Throughout *An Enigmatic Life*, Cameron approaches Knox in an even-handed manner, painting

a complex picture of the man. For example, Cameron dispels the commonly held view that Knox was apathetic towards social justice issues by noting his concern for the World Council of Church's work with refugees and the homeless, described by Knox as "valuable" and "practical Christian work" (2006: 143). Cameron later recalls, however, that Knox praised South Africa's George Whitefield College for standing firm against pressure "to almost replace the gospel of the Cross with the gospel of the relief of poverty" (2006: 316). Knox saw the value in the church's social justice function, but considered this a lower priority to the preaching of the "gospel of the Cross". Drawing out such a complex view of a figure as controversial as Knox is a worthwhile task, and Cameron's contribution to this endeavor is noteworthy.

Bruce Kaye is another Anglican scholar who has written extensively about his denomination. A former General Secretary of the Anglican Church in Australia, and a Visiting Research Fellow at UNSW's School of History, Kaye has lent his insider expertise to debates surrounding Sydney's controversial role within the Global Anglican Communion. Particularly worth noting among his contributions are his books *An Introduction to World Anglicanism* (2008a), *Conflict and the Practice of Christian Faith: The Anglican Experiment* (2009), and the *On Line Opinion* piece 'Anglicans in Sydney in a time of conflict' (2008b).

The first of these works, *An Introduction to World Anglicanism*, is a text often used in Anglican Studies courses. It provides an erudite summary of how local contexts has contributed to distinct Anglican dioceses around the world, and the implications that this has for church unity. In particular, Kaye focuses on how the Communion's structure of provinces run by Archbishops—"described (historically as a fellowship of churches and not as a church" (2008a: 3)—and how this has led to regional diversity. Such a model, Kaye opines, has more in common with the world federation of Lutheran churches than it does the Catholic Church, which conversely regards itself "not as a fellowship of churches but certainly as a universal church." (2008a: 3). The Anglican model of communion becomes a challenge for the church when individual dioceses disagree, for example in the case of North America's consecration of gay Bishops. Kaye also explores the early foundations of Sydney Diocese as part of his wider study. Of particular interest is his exploration of the manner in which the Church of England enjoyed de facto establishment status in the early New South Wales colony, including allowances not available to other denominations until 1836 (2008a: 50). This arrangement arguably led to the diocese viewing itself as the moral centre of Sydney.

Kaye further explores conflict within the Global Anglican Communion in *Conflict and the Practice of Christian Faith*. The book consists of nine further essays with a particular focus on the consecration of gay bishops and the resulting fissures within the Communion. Writing after the 2008 Lambeth meeting, Kaye addresses events connected to the meeting such as the formation of the Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON).

In light of these contemporary debates and questions facing the church—such as to what extent individual dioceses are entitled to determine their own approach—Kaye explores some of the failed past attempts to bring about greater church unity. These include the Church of England’s 1662 Act of Uniformity, which Kaye describes in damning terms as “a pyrrhic victory politically, but something far worse ecclesiologically” (2009: 47) and more recent attempts by the church to enlarge the role of the Archbishop of Canterbury, such as the Windsor Report with its call for what Kaye describes as a “presidentiation (sic) of power” (2009: 115). Kaye ultimately argues that attempts at curtailing dissent are futile, and a potential threat for the denomination’s catholicity.

Kaye is most critical when discussing GAFCON. One focal point is the organisation’s assertion that some Anglican dioceses have promoted a “different gospel” (2009: 145) to the one that they seek to promote. While, in this case, Kaye deals with the former claim made by GAFCON leader Peter Akinola, several Sydney Anglican leaders have also made accusations to the same effect. In response to GAFCON’s accusation that their opponents have dismissed the authority of scripture, he writes:

*The issue here is not, Do you accept the authority of The Bible? Rather it is, How do you accept the Bible in your context, in a way that is faithful to its authority in Anglican Christianity and to the witness to which you are called to render where you are? It is an argument about contextualization (sic) (Kaye, 2009: 22).*

Kaye also calls for the global church to deal with the division with “a gospel sense of patience” (2009: 136) and for the renewal of “fallibility and modesty” in this debate (2009: 166). Ultimately *Conflict and the Practice of Christian Faith* is a highly helpful source in providing the wider context for the Anglican Church’s present day battles, as well as potential ways the church might progress.

In the opinion piece ‘Anglicans in Sydney in a time of conflict’, Kaye again writes about the rift in the Global Anglican Communion, particularly focusing in this case on the 2008 Lambeth meeting, which Sydney Diocese boycotted in favour of GAFCON. Kaye handles the conflict in an even-handed manner. He observes a gradual shift in GAFCON’s rhetoric, which he observes shifted from a threat on the part of dissident bishops to boycott Lambeth to several members denying that GAFCON was an alternative meeting, pledging to attend both conferences (Kaye, 2008b). He also observes, however, that the debate within the Anglican Communion may have had the effect of leading to a hardening of Sydney’s resolve and, ultimately, a clampdown on dissident voices: “[T]he new and enhanced rhetoric might mean an intensification of the already strict control over diversity in the diocese” (Kaye, 2008b). Kaye argues that such quashing of dissent on behalf of the diocese would be hypocritical, given GAFCON’s objections to what they perceive to be disrespect leveled towards their conservative views. “To claim that at the global level and not to respect and engage with dissenters in your own immediate family” writes Kaye “is manifestly dishonest”, (2008b). He concludes with a call for respectful debate within the diocese, noting that, “it would be a very great defeat if...courteous catholicity turned out to be a victim in relations within the Diocese of Sydney” (Kaye, 2008b). Kaye’s outline of the ‘enhanced’ rhetoric that aided the advent of GAFCON helpfully points out the shift in Sydney Anglican discourse that took place under Archbishop Jensen, a shift to which this thesis is devoted.

‘Sydney Anglicans and Homosexuality’ (1997) is a *Journal of Homosexuality* article by another historian, David Hilliard. The piece aims to outline the Sydney Diocese’s opposition to homosexuals in leadership roles and place this within its historical and theological context. This piece is particularly helpful in outlining the development of Sydney Anglican theology. It also recounts the activist role the church has played in campaigns such as resisting the decriminalisation of homosexuality and the first broadcast of the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras (Hilliard, 1997: 102). Hilliard attributes this activism to the early days of the New South Wales colony, when the Anglican Church was the largest denomination in Sydney and attempted to influence the life and ethos of the surrounding area in its role as the de-facto established church (1997:102).

Hilliard also outlines the influential role (still) played by Anglican Church League (ACL) and Moore Theological College. The ACL was founded in 1909 by a group of prominent clergymen

and lawyers who fought to ensure that their particular strand of conservative evangelical theology became the norm in Sydney (1997: 103). Moore College, writes Hilliard, similarly shaped the views of generations of Anglican clergy, with an emphasis on argument and counter-argument “to an extent that was unusual for an Anglican church” (1997: 103). In particular, Hilliard highlights the influence of the aforementioned former Moore Principal, Reverend Dr. Knox, particularly his formative role in the development of the Anglican Church in Sydney’s official stance on homosexuality (1997: 104). The ACL remains an influential force within Australia’s churches. Many of Sydney’s leaders—as well as prominent leaders of other dioceses—hold ACL membership. Moore Theological College is another powerful institution; in order to be ordained as a minister in Sydney, a candidate *must* graduate from there “with very few exceptions” (Jensen, 2012b).

While clearly well researched, ‘Sydney Anglicans and Homosexuality’ occasionally makes sweeping generalisations. Early in the piece, Hilliard writes, “Until the 1960s, (the Sydney Diocese)[...] was closely linked with the city’s business leadership and the conservative political parties” (1997: 102). This claim of political and business allegiances is left as a hanging point. Since this unsubstantiated link would have made for fertile analysis into the Sydney Anglicans’ role in the wider body politic, this is regrettable. The historical contexts explored in the article though, provide an excellent grounding for this thesis’ CDA.

In a manner similar to the above text, Porter’s book *The New Puritans* (2006) outlines the characteristics of Sydney Diocese. *Sydney Anglicans and the Threat to World Anglicanism* (2011) is an updated version of *The New Puritans* for an international audience, which also explores the impact of the Sydney Diocese’s 2009 financial losses. In both works, Porter proposes the central argument that recent years have seen the church becoming increasingly fundamentalist in its outlook. The work draws on James Barr’s description of this fundamentalism as including concern with doctrinal purity, “authoritarian leadership, behavioural requirements, and a tendency to separatism” (Porter, 2006: 24). In labeling Sydney Diocese as ‘Puritans’, Porter compares them to “seventeenth-Century English forebears who deposed and beheaded bishops (as well as a King) in pursuit of a pure church” (2006: 2). While severe, the point of the comparison is that the Sydney Diocese’s program is seeking wide-ranging reform of the church in line with its conservative viewpoints (Porter, 2006: 2). Porter writes that this increasing influence is part of a campaign that draws on Sydney’s wealth, Internet communications and global networks with other dioceses (2006: 3). She is concerned

“with the effect Sydney and all it represents is having, and will have, on the national and international Churches, on the wider community and on the role of women” (Porter, 2006: 6).

As the above quotes suggest, Porter’s work is avowedly polemical. She makes no attempt at being ‘balanced’—opting instead for a commentator’s approach, albeit one with “diligent research and careful analysis” (2006: 2). This approach is influenced and informed by membership of the Anglican Church’s (national) General Synod since 1987 and its Standing Committee since 1989 (Porter, 2006: 61). While critics may consider this proximity to the issues surrounding Sydney Anglicans and her work’s polemical overtones as undermining the validity of her conclusions, *The New Puritans* is, as Porter states, thoroughly researched and relatively even-handed in its discussion. For example, in the book’s introduction, Porter acknowledges not all Sydney Anglicans share the views she is outlining. She defines her ‘target’ as:

*[T]he Sydney Diocese in its official decision-making capacities [...]not just the archbishop (sic) and assistant bishops but also the dominant ethos of its synod and the synod standing committee, as well as the theological heavyweights—generally teachers at Moore Theological College—who define the ‘party line’ its rationale and the tactics used to impose them (2006: 8).*

Porter opts not to focus extensively on the former Archbishop “who in so many ways seems to embody his diocese [and] would be a fascinating study in himself” (2006: 7). As should be apparent by now, *Graving Another Testament* aims, in part, to carry out this kind of Jensen-specific study that Porter eschewed.

A number of critics have directly responded to Porter’s polemics with one particularly critical review of *The New Puritans* coming from former Religious Affairs editor for *The Age*, Barney Zwartz. In this piece (2006), Zwartz argues that, while making her arguments regarding the diocese and its response to particular issues, Porter “over eggs the pudding” (2006). For example, Zwartz cites Porter’s claim that Sydney rejects the gains made by Australian women, which he dismisses as being “a bit rich” (2006).

In other cases, Sydney Diocese insiders have been among those responding to Porter’s work, reacting with umbrage to what they perceive to be liberal attacks on their evangelical diocese. Current Moore College principal Mark Thompson, and former Moore lecturer and Sydney



Anglican minister Michael Jensen, have been among these apologists. The former wrote a review of *Sydney Anglicans and the Threat to World Anglicanism* that was published on the ABC's *Religion and Ethics* webpage. Entitled 'Serious flaws in Muriel Porter's misguided polemic' (2011), Thompson's critique is caustically dismissive of Porter's work. Thompson accuses the author of using "whatever means might be at her disposal" to further the cause of women's ordination, "vilify[ing] those who [...] disagree with her" (Thompson, 2011).

In a similar manner to Thompson's review, Michael Jensen has responded directly to Porter's accusations. His published works include the book *Sydney Anglicanism: An Apology* (2012), and the shorter opinion piece on the ABC's *Religion and Ethics* web page, 'Indomitable Sydney? The challenge of Sydney Anglicanism'. In these Jensen argues that Sydney Diocese is not, as critics mistake, peculiar and alone in its conservative evangelical theology and radical low-church ecclesiology. Rather, he argues, "Sydney shares its evangelical convictions with millions of Anglicans all over the world in continuity with those in the past [...] Sydney is not nearly as isolated and eccentric as its critics pretend" (Jensen, 2012b). In attempting to defend and account for the nature of his diocese Jensen writes with an eye to Sydney's historical and social history; that of an often ostentatious and wealthy city with the heritage of a convict settlement. His observations in these two works are most helpful for *Graving Another Testament's* purposes as they serve to account for the development of Sydney Anglican discourse. While the former Moore lecturer has at times been willing to criticise his own church where he has deemed it necessary, Jensen's tone is defensive. For example, he responds with direct umbrage to Porter's treatment of his diocese in *Sydney Anglicans and the Threat to World Anglicanism*, writing: "no one has written in this way about, say, Melbourne Diocese or even the Diocese of London" (Jensen, 2012b).

Kevin Giles critiques Jensen's work in the paper 'Response to 'Sydney Anglicanism: An Apology'' (2012). Dealing with a former colleague whom he obviously respects, Giles' analysis is measured and thorough. For example he calls on readers to carefully read *Sydney Anglicanism: An Apology* before engaging with his critique (Giles, 2012: 1) Taking aim at Jensen's argument that the diocese is representative of a wider movement within Anglicanism and merely reflective of its evangelical character, he observes that the former Moore lecturer has sought to defend Sydney specifically, which indicates that there is something unique enough about Sydney Diocese to warrant such treatment.

To this point, Giles makes an important contribution to the subject of the thesis at hand when he writes that “virtually everyone outside of Sydney, including other evangelicals, are convinced that there is something quite distinctive about Sydney evangelicals. I have travelled widely and wherever I go people indicate this belief the minute I say I trained at Moore Theological College Sydney” (2012: 2). The distinctness of Sydney Diocese is one of *Graving Another Testament’s* focal points, and as such it is helpful that Giles has already made the case for the diocese’s unique nature in such a thorough manner.

In much the same manner as Giles, Keith Mascord writes about his experience of the Sydney Diocese from the perspective of a former ‘insider’ with still existing ties to the diocese’s leadership. His book, *A Restless Faith* (2012), traces the trajectory of his faith journey over the course of his life, including his time as a parish priest in rural New South Wales and Sydney, his tenure as a lecturer at Moore Theological College, and his life after his leaving the ministry. Mascord is irenic in his approach to his former colleagues and friends, with whom he travelled but no longer agrees on a number of contentious topics (he nominates homosexuality as one example).

The Honourable Michael Kirby is another Sydney Anglican insider who has contributed to debates surrounding his diocese, particularly its approach to sexuality. His primary contribution to this is the book *Five Uneasy Pieces* (2011), for which he provided an introduction and promoted in several public speeches. In *Five Uneasy Pieces’* introduction (2012), Kirby argues that the church now faces the challenge of reconciling scripture’s apparent condemnation of homosexuality with “the discoveries that science is presenting” (in Wright 2012: xxvi). The former High Court Justice observes that, in its efforts to do so, certain leaders such as the former Archbishop of Sydney have come to the conclusion that homosexuality is not sinful in itself provided that this orientation is not acted upon—an embrace of lifelong celibacy that Kirby describes as “unreasonable, irrational, and [...] just not going to happen” (in Wright, 2012: xxvii). In submitting his desired hermeneutical approach to the topic, Kirby compares it with the process of interpreting law. He recalled that, when he first studied law in the 1950s, “the tradition of the English law we learnt was one that generally demanded a literal and verbal interpretation of binding texts” (Kirby in Wright, 2012: xxix), an unrealistic interpretative tradition that gave way to other traditions that recognise the role of context in the writing of words. Kirby argues that the same should be true of biblical literalism, given that literalist hermeneutics have the potential to cause great suffering:

*We should feel uneasy about the translation of words that causes cruelty and unkindness to vulnerable minorities. Surely we have learned enough in the last century about the error of those approaches to Scripture, including the source in St Matthew's Gospel which was the textual origin of the anti-Semitism, that fuelled the hatred of the Jews in Hitler's Germany (in Wright, 2012: xxx).*

Kirby has sought to counter “cruelty and unkindness” (in Wright, 2012: xxx) by commending a critical approach to scripture to his fellow Sydney Anglicans. As the above quote demonstrates, Kirby’s rhetoric is at times impassioned, and his contribution to the sexuality debate has been one of informed polemic. By contrast, other commentators have sought to be ‘balanced’ in their treatment of the Sydney Diocese. Two religious affairs journalists whose work stands out as typifying this strand are former Religious Affairs reporter for *The Age*, Barnaby Zwartz and former *Sydney Morning Herald* reporter Chris McGillion. During his career, Zwartz brought the unique perspective of someone born into a Jewish family who converted to Anglicanism later in life. His balanced approach to his subject matter is particularly evident in the opinion piece, ‘On gay marriage, both sides are guilty of bollocks’ (2012), published in Melbourne’s *The Age* as well as other Fairfax newspapers. Zwartz argues that both sides of the same-sex marriage controversy—for and against—have been guilty of misinformation and misrepresented their opponent’s views amongst the debate’s furore. For example, Zwartz observes, “There is an error [...] made by both conservatives and progressives (sometimes deliberately) when they claim that the conservatives “speak for the church” as though it were a monolithic institution with a uniform voice” (2012). This, as is observed several times in this thesis, is a technique that the Sydney Diocesan leaders have drawn upon, claiming that theirs is the perspective representative of Christianity. On the other hand, Zwartz argues that conservative Christians have been misrepresented as opposing same-sex marriage for disingenuous reasons (such as a desire for power) and being the only group to provide opposition (despite self-described atheist Prime Minister Julia Gillard voting against same-sex marriage in 2012). He goes on to call for a same-sex marriage debate shorn of ad homonym attacks. As he writes:

*[...] I am not endorsing any view of gay marriage. I simply want to see a more nuanced level of debate in which neither advocates nor opponents are stereotyped and therefore dismissed. The more heated the issue, the more*

*important it is for both sides actually to listen to what their opponents say*  
(Zwartz, 2012).

As with many opinion pieces on the subject, Zwartz is sometimes inaccurate in his assessment. For example, he writes “Don’t be misled by the claim that Australia has a powerful and influential religious right akin to that in the United States, because it doesn’t” (2012). This, it should be observed, is an arguable point, with Marion Maddox—whose work is reviewed below—among those who have convincingly argued that Australia’s religious right exercises more power than is often considered to be the case (2004). Nonetheless, Zwartz’s opinion piece is a valuable contribution to the same-sex marriage debate in Australia, and makes easier the task of analysing the discourse that surrounds this topic.

As adumbrated above, another writer who has written about the Sydney Diocese, albeit in a more journalistic fashion is Chris McGillion, formerly of the *Sydney Morning Herald*. In the book *The Chosen Ones* (2005), McGillion, outlines that he is not himself a Sydney Anglican, and that his perspective is that of an outsider who was born into Catholicism. A significant contribution of this book is McGillion’s outline of Peter Jensen’s rise to the role of Archbishop. Drawing on the recollections of South Sydney Bishop, Rob Forsyth, as well as his own interviews, McGillion details the role played by former members of the controversial Reformed Evangelical Protestant Association (RePA) in Jensen’s election. As Chapter One of *Graving Another Testament* demonstrates, McGillion’s journalistic commitment to thoroughness in research ensures that the work is insightful.

Another theme briefly touched upon by some of the above authors such as Porter (2006; 2011) is the potential “shattering” of the Global Anglican Communion, a widening split between member dioceses. Porter assigns blame to Sydney for this development. This global rift is also the focal point of *The Fate of Communion, ‘The Agony of Anglicanism’* (2006), a collection of essays edited by Ephraim Radner and Phillip Turner. The book’s subtitle ‘neatly describes the tone of the book, which assesses the church’s disunity over homosexuality as being a painful ‘humiliation’ (Radner and Turner, 2006: 10). The editors’ introduction observes that this debate concerns an age old question regarding how the Communion balances ‘truth’ on one hand and ‘unity’ on the other (Radner and Turner, 2006: 4): that is, when members disagree over what constitutes biblical truth, how are they to remain part of the same church polity, especially when unity is viewed as “a prime aspect of the nature of the church itself—one that manifests God’s

purpose to unite all things in heaven and earth in Christ?” (Radner and Turner, 2006: 6) Furthering the dilemma the Communion faces is its church polity; in the absence of papal authority something of a consensus model exists whereby “each member waits upon the other in patience until, in respect to divisive matters, a common mind is achieved” (Radner and Turner, 2006: 8). According to Radner and Turner, this model is strained when individual dioceses opt to go their own way. Radner and Turner argue that the disunity over issues of sexuality is not limited to competing ethical viewpoints alone, but also the debated nature of the Anglican Church itself. That is, there is conjecture over the question of whether it is to be understood:

*as a ‘communion of churches’ in which the ‘autonomy’ of each is properly exercised only within the constraints of a wider fellowship of common belief and practice; or is it best understood as a ‘federation of churches’ in which each member church is autonomous in a way that makes it uniquely responsible for its stewardship of God’s self-revelation in Christ? (Radner and Turner, 2006: 8).*

While primarily exploring the sexuality debate using the North American Episcopalian churches as a locus point (and therefore not making significant reference to Sydney Diocese), *The Fate of Communion* does much to illuminate the global and political context for the debates in which Jensen and other senior Sydney Anglican leaders engaged.

A number of opinion leaders from Australia’s media have recently sought to similarly explain the kinds of controversies Hilliard, Porter and Radner and Turner deal with, directing this commentary to broader audiences of media consumers. Marr (2008, 2009) stands out as a particularly active contributor to this field, with multiple pieces devoted entirely to Archbishop Jensen and his legacy. These works stand out as offering a useful summary for the uninitiated. The standard drops; however, when Marr’s occasionally parochial tone overrides his undeniable penchant for thorough research. While it is no doubt valuable that Marr brings these issues into mainstream news publications, religious affairs is a specialist field in which Marr has no expertise, formally or experientially, hence his apparent tendency to make assumptions to fill gaps in his knowledge.

‘The Archbishop says no’ (2008) is a *Good Weekend* article penned by Marr in the wake of the above-noted decision to boycott the 2008 Lambeth conference. Marr places this decision in the context of tensions and division within the global Anglican Communion (explored in so much detail by Kaye, as well as Radner and Turner.) In the article, Marr usefully identifies the many dimensions of the controversy, including legal aspects. Archbishop Jensen is reluctant to describe his turn away from the Communion as a “split”, because doing so would have lawfully required him to leave church property behind (2008: 3).

The parochial tone observed above is evident in Marr’s statement “Visitors from Melbourne worshipping in a Sydney parish might think they’ve wandered into a Protestant chapel: where are the crosses and vestments? What’s this demand that all believers be Born Again in Jesus Christ (2008: 2)?” This section raises eyebrows because, as is fairly well known in theological circles, the majority of Australian Anglicans (other than those from Anglo-Catholic backgrounds) are Protestant. Furthermore, the requirement to declare ones’ self “Born Again” is much more likely to feature in Charismatic and Pentecostal churches than it is in Anglican congregations.

‘Anglican Business’ (2009) is a column by Marr that appeared in the December 2009 edition of *The Monthly*. It follows on from the commentary provided in ‘The Archbishop says no’. This opinion piece primarily focuses on certain financial difficulties Sydney Diocese underwent as a result of the global financial crisis. Marr attributes much blame to Jensen himself for putting the church through these financial decisions because of a series of risky investments. Taking aim at Jensen’s justifications for the church’s position, Marr particularly focused on Jensen’s address to the diocese’s annual Synod, which, among other topics, covered the church’s financial problems. Marr opined that Jensen’s speech (“a *tour de force* of clerical obfuscation”) served to avoid blame being attributed to church leadership because words such as ‘greed’ and ‘avarice’ remained unsaid (2009: 10). Jensen instead made appeals to the possibility of God’s “secret will,” “testing” the church (Marr, 2009: 10). This section of Marr’s piece is of much relevance to *Graving Another Testament*, because it examines Jensen’s rhetoric with a critical eye on his avoidance of responsibility.

Like Marr’s other article ‘The Archbishop says no’, in ‘Anglican Business’ Marr makes a basic error when he writes “Sydney evangelicals see prosperity as a sign of God’s favour” (2009: 10). This statement is another example of Marr’s pejorative tone overriding accuracy; Sydney

evangelicals largely reject the prosperity doctrine that Marr refers to here; this is a teaching that is far more likely to be a feature in the theology of their Pentecostal counterparts.

The uneven nature of Australia's religious affairs reporting (evident, perhaps, in the Marr examples above) is the subject matter of several media analysts' work. Two such analyses were published in the June/July 2006 edition of *Walkley Magazine*. ABC Religious Affairs correspondent Geraldine Doogue penned the first of these, titled 'You gotta have faith' (2006). In this opinion piece, Doogue argues that there is an increasing demand for religious affairs reporting in Australia that remains unfulfilled. This, she posits, is despite the fact that such reporting, when done well, is compelling and can attract an audience. This was seen on an episode of the ABC's *Compass* that explored the conversion of veteran journalist, Mike Willesee, to Roman Catholicism, a documentary that met with acclaim and high television ratings (Doogue, 2006: 11). This example, however, is said by Doogue to be exceptional, with Australian journalists seemingly content to avoid deeper questions regarding theology and people's belief systems (2006: 11).

While several journalists successfully carve out a career in religious affairs reporting (with *Radio National's* Stephen Crittenden and Rachel Kohn and *The Sydney Morning Herald's* Julia Baird listed in the article as examples), Doogue believes that editorial interest is "brittle" and that religious affairs is a marginal "niche" (2006: 11). This is a situation that may be gradually changing however. Writing on why Australians would support more—rather than less—reporting on religion, Doogue discerns that the nation's "modern mood" is searching for community and values, a phenomenon that demographer Hugh Mackay (cited in Doogue, 2006: 11) has expressed in his work on the "re-tribalising" of Australians. Doogue predicts that journalists and editors who seek to tap into this modern quest for meaning "will almost certainly be rewarded with fresh material, satisfied customers and occasionally a damned good page-one story. Because in many ways this is a curious vacuum waiting to be filled" (2006: 12).

'You gotta have faith' makes a strong argument as to why religion is a fascinating topic, in need of expanded reportage. Its central relevance to *Graving Another Testament* lies in this area, and Doogue expresses in an erudite way why such a study into contemporary Sydney Anglican discourse is fascinating and necessary. However, Doogue's piece lacks any explanation as to why Australia's media has not pursued religious affairs in a more rounded way.

A second *Walkley* article, entitled 'The religious divide' (2006) provides such an explanation. Written by ABC Religious Affairs producer and presenter Toni Hassan, this opinion piece appraises Australia's religious affairs reporting in much the same manner as 'You gotta have faith'. Hassan describes the same lack of religious affairs reportage that Doogue laments. She presents this as representing a 'religious divide' between Australia's faith institutions and Australia's media outlets. Hassan says Australia's Christian and Muslim leaders distrust media outlets, they feel that Australia's press reduces them to caricatures and "is incapable of [...] understanding what it is that draws people to religion in the first place" (2006: 13). On the other side of the divide, Hassan observes that many journalists "are clueless about the workings of faith" (2006: 13). To reinforce this point she draws on the example of a "specialist religion writer (who) told me he was asked by a colleague working on a religion story what the difference between the new and old testament (*sic*) was" (Hassan, 2006: 13). As was considered above, such a gulf between journalists and the church is arguably also evident in Marr's work.

In order to account for why such a gulf exists, Hassan argues that journalists tend to report more on conflict and scandal (with a given example being division within the Anglican Communion) because these have a greater chance of standing out in the daily news cycle, and are easier to present in an entertaining and engaging way (Hassan, 2006: 14). Furthermore, throughout the piece Hassan develops the concept that secular media and religious institutions often view the world in different ways, with classical journalism stressing the need for objectivity and "the proof of things," while theology operates with mystery and the unknown (2006: 13). As an example of how this works out in terms of news reporting, she opines, "faith or a belief in God is neither falsifiable nor provable...As such, it is not 'information' [journalists] can handle well" (Hassan, 2006: 13).

While these differences are very real and identifiable, Hassan argues that, nonetheless, journalists and people of faith must work to achieve greater inroads. 'The religious divide' discerns the importance of religious affairs reporting when Hassan writes "there is a religious dimension to many of our biggest news stories, among them the war against terrorism and...(the) Cronulla riots" (2006: 13). Further, she claims:

*A journalist's mandate is not only to package the events of the day but to explore what stirs and pushes people to action: to recognise that there are things of great importance to people that go on in different time frames. The best work of*



*political and economic correspondents does just that. It looks at what draws and inspires people* (Hassan, 2006: 14).

Hassan's considered understanding regarding the importance of religious affairs reporting is one of this piece's major strengths. Another is her keen analysis as to why this importance is not well recognised. The column therefore makes a significant contribution to the criticism of Australia's religious affairs reporting, a subject matter to which *Graving Another Testament* devotes considerable attention.

Perhaps Australia's most prominent commentator on the interaction between faith and politics is the Macquarie University academic Marion Maddox. Maddox is well versed in the length and breadth of these intersecting topics, which is evident in her books *God Under Howard* (2005) and *Taking God to School* (2014). The central thesis of the former title corresponds with Hassan's work. Maddox argues that Australia's status as a largely secular country has ironically resulted in politicians not being sufficiently held accountable for policy borne out of their religious commitments. That is, Australia's Christian politicians do not need to clarify or face tough questions regarding their beliefs and whether they affect public policy. Maddox's central thesis is that former Australian Prime Minister John Howard at times made subtle appeals to a right wing, fundamentalist Christian constituency.<sup>8</sup> The book also explores the rise of fundamentalist Christianity in the parliamentary Liberal Party via the activism of the conservative Lyons Forum. *God Under Howard's* key contribution is its exploration of the link between Christian faith and political beliefs. For example, Maddox explores the implications of how Howard self-described as a Methodist. This, she argues, is a misleading description given that the Methodists joined the Uniting Church in 1977 (2005: 3). Maddox draws extensively on research carried out in 1966 (and later in 1981) by sociologist Hans Mol. This research repeatedly found that survey respondents who regularly attended church were more likely to be tolerant towards 'out-groups', including refugees, than others while also being more conservative towards moral issues such as abortion (Maddox, 2005: 140-141). Such a finding might be considered a further illustration of the need to analyse Sydney Anglican discourse. That studies held over a long period of time uncovered this kind of nuance ensures that Sydney Anglicans are a difficult faith group for a journalist to cover with fairness and accuracy.

Maddox's next book, *Taking God to School* explores the rise of Australian federal funding for private religious schools and the Howard Liberal Government's introduction of Christian

chaplains into both private and public schools. These funding arrangements, Maddox argues, have imperiled the original 19<sup>th</sup> Century egalitarian concept of Australia's education system as free, compulsory and secular. As the daughter of a Methodist minister and having attended both public and private schools, Maddox brings a unique background to the topic of school funding (2014: xii). Maddox traces the evolution of funding arrangements, beginning with the Menzies Liberal Government and working her way through successive administrations. Her historical recollection is invaluable in providing context for contemporary debates surrounding school funding and Australian church and state relations. Maddox's treatment of Man: A Course of Study (MACOS)—a controversial social science course introduced to schools in the 1970s—is of particular interest to this thesis' subject matter. The course was framed around the questions "What is human about human beings? How did they get that way? How can they be made more so?" (Maddox, 2014: xiii). The course introduced students to a number of ethical quandaries such as whether it was right for humans to hunt animals (Maddox, 2014: xiii). Conservative religious activists in the United States and Australia took umbrage with MACOS' violent subject matter and what they perceived to be the threatening of religious certainties. Eventually, they would respond by establishing private Christian schools that reflected their desired education of children. Also of note here is the emergence of low-fee Christian schools on the fringes of Australian cities that were introduced with the legislative aid of the Howard government. This was a policy once sought by the Sydney Anglican Archbishop who preceded Jensen, The Most Reverend Harry Goodhew (Williams, 2013: 216-217). Also of direct interest is Maddox's passing reference to *The Power Index* website ranking Archbishop Jensen as Australia's second most influential religious figure (behind only Cardinal Pell, and ahead of the Australian Christian Lobby's Jim Wallace) (Maddox, 2014: 16). While only a passing comment, made in the context of a broader discussion regarding Wallace, this observation serves to confirm the relevance of this thesis' main subject.

As observed earlier in this chapter, the task of analysing how power is codified in institutional or political discourse, the main agenda of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), is a complex and multilayered undertaking. A number of theorists have devoted much of their professional lives to understanding the complex topic of discourse in order to disentangle some of its attendant power relationships. Two that emerge as particularly significant to this field of scholarship are historian and philosopher Michel Foucault and linguist James Paul Gee.

As noted earlier, Foucault is perhaps the most influential theorist for developing an understanding of ‘discourse’ and ‘power’ and what these related themes entail. Foucault’s work is also notoriously complex, seemingly contradictory at points, and frustrating to neatly characterise. Theologian James K.A Smith provides something of a concise explanation of Foucault’s work and context. In *Who’s Afraid of Post Modernism* (2007), Smith explores the theories of postmodern philosophers Jacques Derrida, Jean-François Lyotard, and Foucault. Arguing that Christians have often reduced these theorists down to ‘bumper sticker’ understandings (quotes such as Derrida’s oft-repeated quote “there is nothing outside the text,” which is often interpreted and held up as being antithetical to the truth claims of Christianity). Smith places these quotes in the contexts of the philosophers’ broader work. In so doing, Smith seeks to challenge churches to consider the implications of these theorists’ work on their ministry. In his chapter on Foucault, Smith focuses on Foucault’s conceptualisation of discipline and the way institutions such as prisons constitute individuals through their disciplinary programs. In an attempt to faithfully position the philosopher, Smith (2007: 98) interprets Foucault to be a classic liberal; that is, a figure concerned with the struggle of the individual to retain their freedoms and identity over and against institutions that would seek to circumvent these.

*Who’s Afraid of Post Modernism* also critiques some churches’ tendency to view postmodernism as an insidious threat and to attack its alleged secular relativism with an obsessive and possessive claim to objective truth (Smith, 2007: 23). This distrust of postmodernism—as is noted above—is a perspective that Hilliard (1997), Porter (2006) and Marr (2008) have observed as being popular within the Sydney Diocese.

The second theorist, James Paul Gee, provides another, precise and useful, understanding of discourse in a book chapter titled ‘What Is Literacy?’ (1991). As noted earlier, this chapter provides a succinct and workable definition of a discourse:

*A socially accepted association among ways of using language, of thinking and of acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or ‘social network’ (Gee, 1991: 3).*

A flaw in Gee’s article is evident in his comment, “There are a number of important points that one can make about discourses. None of them, for some reason, are very popular with

Americans” (1991: 4). Such a statement ignores the contributions of Gee’s fellow linguist Noam Chomsky whose major works explore the role of elite propaganda in managing the “public mind” (2002: 19). Despite Gee’s failure to recognise Chomsky’s work, ‘What Is Literacy?’ is detailed, erudite and useful. Furthermore, Gee’s definition of discourse is what drives the discourse analysis conducted in this thesis. It provides a formidable language for the phenomena that the above literature has commented on. Without an ability to understand Sydney Anglican discourse, media outlets can misunderstand and ultimately misrepresent the faith group’s objectives and motivations.

### **Literature Review Conclusion**

Having provided an overview of the way various theorists have approached the Sydney Anglicans from a number of contrasting approaches and points of view. It is clear that there is a need for an analysis of the Sydney Diocese’s communications output, with an eye to how contentious theological arguments are framed. While some commentators—particularly Marr—have paid attention to *how* Archbishop Jensen crafted his words, few have considered his rhetorical reach and his use of language as a tool for engagement and persuasion. As such, *Graving Another Testament* fills a particular gap in existing research, holding Archbishop Jensen’s arguments to the kind of scrutiny CDA can provide. Chapter One seeks to begin this broader task by analysing how Peter Jensen rose to the high ecclesial office of Archbishop of Sydney—and the effort exerted by a network of disgruntled conservative evangelicals in order to get him there.

## Chapter One: The Jensen Ascension

As stated in the Introduction, Chapter One focuses on the rise and early rhetoric of the former Anglican Archbishop of Sydney, Peter Jensen. Briefly examining the former Archbishop's biography, attention is given to his signature approach to theology and ministry, the development of his ideas and practices and the events leading to his 2001 election. It should be noted that Chapter One briefly explores events and material outside of the nominated 2001 to 2013 time range. This deviation is deemed necessary as Jensen's biography sheds light on the development of his signature rhetoric.

While by no means an exhaustive biography of Archbishop Jensen, in order to trace the development of the signature rhetoric that *Graving Another Testament* is devoted to analysing, this background section highlights key events in the former Archbishop's life and career. The rise of the Reformed Evangelical Protestant Association (RePA), a controversial reformist group, is also considered here because of the role this organisation played in Jensen's elevation.

A brief analysis of the public rhetoric of the former Archbishop's brother, Phillip Jensen, is appended to this chapter. It must be articulated that Phillip Jensen—the former Dean of Sydney—contributed to the shape of Sydney Diocese to an extent similar to his older brother, making this a necessary addition. Considering the younger Jensen's rhetoric is important because such a study reinforces the analysis of his brother's public statements. Telescoping to this analysis, Phillip Jensen's public utterances stood out as blunt, truncated and less measured than Peter's carefully scripted rhetoric. Despite differences in rhetorical style, both of the Brothers Jensen helped constitute Sydney Anglicanism's current, dominant discourse. Indeed, their respective ministries are intertwined and connected in a manner that transcends filial bonds. The former Archbishop courted controversy when he nominated his younger brother to be Dean of St Andrew's Cathedral in 2002 (McDonald 2002). As this chapter explores, the Jensen brothers' rise to prominence resulted in great change for the diocese and continues to have consequences for all of its member churches.

## **Background**

The title of this thesis and the epigraph in the Introduction compares Archbishop Jensen with one of the first Chaplains to the colony of New South Wales, the Reverend Samuel Marsden. The main point of this comparison is that these two senior Sydney Anglican Church figures have decidedly mixed reputations. In the lead up to the 2008 Lambeth Conference boycotted by Sydney Diocese, journalist Barbara McMahon wrote an article that exposed conflicting opinions of Peter Jensen. In McMahon's article, GAFCON leadership team member Chris Sugden described Jensen as "charming, caring and very impressive." Sugden said, "He is clear, he is decisive, he acts like an archbishop... His mind is like a polished razor—he is very sharp—and he is straightforward. He is very good at chairing meetings and moving business forward" (McMahon, 2008). On the other hand, comments offered by the Rector of St Alban's Anglican Church in Epping, John Cornish, painted a far less flattering portrait; "He finds it difficult to deal with people with different points of view. He looks on it almost as a personal attack. He should be more aware of the fact that he doesn't have all the answers" (McMahon, 2008). Cornish further opined "There is a culture of fear [within the diocese] that makes people unwilling to stand up and express their concerns about what is happening" (McMahon, 2008). Much like Samuel Marsden, remembered in equal measure for being a brutal Sydney magistrate and warm missionary to New Zealand, Jensen is the focus of contradictory depictions. This chapter explores two main interlocking questions regarding the former Archbishop's dual reputation: What was it about Jensen that conjured up such polarising points of view? And how did he become so controversial? These may be considered by reviewing Jensen's background, particularly his conversion at the 1959 Billy Graham crusade, his tenure as Principal of Sydney's Moore Theological College and the circumstances surrounding his controversial ascension to the office of Archbishop.

Born in 1943, Peter Frederick Jensen grew up in the eastern suburbs of Sydney. From several family accounts, Jensen grew up in a home where debate was encouraged and engaged in vigorously. As Jensen recalled in an interview, his family may have been the only one in Australia to argue the relative merits of Charles I and Oliver Cromwell

with Peter and his brothers holding a more pro-parliament view than their father, who defended the royalists (Wooding, 2002). These early debates may have helped shape the future Archbishop's penchant for constructing argument and counterargument. During an interview published in *The Bulletin* (2003), he recalled being only a nominal Christian for much of his childhood. "Growing up in Bellevue Hill, where most boys in my class were Jewish, I was a Christian because I wasn't a Jew" (Bagnall, 2003, cited in McGillion, 2005: 85).

The 1959 Australian tour of the American evangelist, Billy Graham, however, proved life changing. Jensen, who was sixteen years old at the time, attended with Phillip, who was thirteen (McGillion, 2005: 85). As he would tell an Anglican Church League (ACL) dinner in 2000, "Two things happened [at the crusade]. First, I became a definite, committed, evangelical Christian, living for the Lord Jesus Christ. Second, a challenge from Mr. Graham led me to the ministry of God's word" (McGillion, 2005: 86). The 1959 Graham crusade was a landmark event in Australian religious history, bringing in large audiences and then converts, many of whom later received a calling to ordained ministry. Noteworthy future clergy included the Brothers Jensen, and future University of Sydney Uniting Church Chaplain and Religion Studies lecturer, John Hirt. Enrolments at Moore College increased significantly over the next two years (Porter, 2006: 53). Indeed, the event formed the root of Peter Jensen's faith, theology and, later, ministry. McGillion suggested that Jensen still displays the zeal of the convert (2005: 88).<sup>9</sup> Nonetheless, there is a particular sobriety to the way the former Archbishop describes the impact of the Crusade on his life, defining it as a "clarifying moment" where what he had learnt in Sunday school finally "made sense" (Porter, 2011:44). As Porter observed, if Jensen's recollection is accurate, "even at the age of 15, he seems to have embodied the rationalism of propositional revelation" (2011: 44). In a later interview with Marr, Jensen reflected that Graham's "appeal to the Bible as his authority meant he wasn't speaking out of his own head but he was explaining the Bible to us [...] It had a big impact on me" (2008). This appeal to the authority of scripture later became a common aspect of Jensen's rhetoric. For example, the former Archbishop would define his stance against the ordination of homosexuals to the ministry as adhering to God's running of the church "through the Bible" (Marr, 2008).

After completing his High School Leaving Certificate Jensen began an unsuccessful career in Law. He had several attempts at the first year of a Law degree and worked as an articled clerk in the same law firm as a young, “always political”, John Howard (Marr, 2008). Jensen later described himself as a “failure in the law” but his failure allowed him to rediscover his calling to ministry, which was first ignited during the Crusade. In 1966 he arrived at Sydney’s Moore Theological College to study for the Licentiate in Theology. It was here that Jensen first displayed a mental acuity for theology that defined much of his career. At the college he won the Hey Sharp prize for placing first in his course.

At the time that Jensen received this honour, Moore College was a theological powerhouse, churning out graduates that similarly felt called to ministry through the Graham Crusade. Many of these men would go on to become leaders in their denomination (Porter, 2006: 53). Knox was Moore’s principal from 1959 to 1985 and a powerful figure within Sydney Diocese. The concept of propositional revelation and much of the diocese’s public opposition to homosexuality originally flowed from his pen. As might be expected, Knox played a significant role in shaping the young Jensen’s early theology and his career as Archbishop. Jensen described this influence himself when he told Marcia Cameron “Broughton Knox saved a whole generation of students. Without the academic rigour that Broughton Knox...brought to the lecture room the next generation would have been lost” (Cameron, 2006: 196). During his tenure at Moore, Knox was a proponent of particular kind of biblical theology, which almost exclusively emphasised the role of scripture. He insisted that there was no distinction between God and the Bible, arguing, “the Bible is God speaking to us” making God and the Bible “one entity” (Knox, cited in Cameron, 2006: 273). Some of Knox’s former students who are critical of their former principal contend that he used the Bible to reinforce his own views, dismissing the views of any he considered to be ‘liberal’ as “rubbish” because they were not based on Scripture (Cameron, 2006: 198). As Cameron explains, as “a scholar in the Classical Reformed tradition” Knox “[...] stood on the shoulders of Augustine, the Reformers and the Evangelical Anglican scholars”, but may not have identified this to his students (Cameron, 2006: 198). As a result “while he appeared to claim to be approaching the Scriptures absolutely freshly he was in fact reading them through the lens of the Reformed tradition” (Cameron, 2006: 198). As is argued repeatedly throughout *Graving Another*



*Testament*, this description equally applies to Peter Jensen given his calls for ‘Bible based’ theology.

One of Knox’s significant beliefs, and one that he would impress upon Moore College candidate such as Jensen was the belief that the term ‘church’ was best understood as referring to the “actual meeting of believers” rather than “an ongoing society of believers” (Robinson in O’Brien and Peterson, 1986: xi, cited in Porter, 2011: 40). In other words, Knox advocated a congregation-centred approach, one that placed less emphasis on Anglicanism as a denomination. As Porter wrote:

*[This] teaching made the concept of a national Anglican church, let alone an international Anglican Communion, significantly less important, and in effect, gave permission for an even further loosening of the [...] ties between Sydney and the rest of the Australian church. It led directly to the assertion of some Sydney Diocesan leaders that Sydney and the rest of the Anglican Church inhabit different universes (2011: 41).*

This tendency towards separatism, to the extent of scarcely identifying as Anglican, is a common trope in contemporary Sydney Anglican discourse. It made possible the ‘us and them’ mentality and separatism evident in much contemporary Sydney Anglican discourse. For example, in his address to the ACL dinner in 2000, Jensen argued that:

*However important the diocese, the episcopacy and the liturgy (and they are all important) they exist to serve the congregation and not the other way around [...] We [Sydney Diocese] have not waited for permission [from the national church] to change what happens in church; we have done what needs to be done to nurture Christians of all ages (Porter, 2011: 41).*

In 1969, having earned the Licentiate in Theology, Peter Jensen was ordained for ministry. The call he had experienced at the Graham Crusade had now been officially recognised by the Anglican Church. Building on the foundation he established during the Licentiate in Theology, Jensen moved on to further studies, including a Bachelor

of Divinity at the University of London (an external degree undertaken through Moore College) and a DPhil at Oxford University, completed in 1979. His Doctoral thesis was entitled *The Life of Faith in the Teaching of Elizabethan Protestantism*. Jensen argued that the Church of the Elizabethan era was weakened and corrupted by an undue emphasis on the need for good works, and the loss of the pure tenets of the Calvinist doctrine of salvation (Wooding, 2002). He would later argue (in what might be considered separatist terms) that this was also the problem of the modern Anglican Communion, opining in an interview, “We [Sydney Diocese] regard ourselves as a confessional Church, as most Anglicans today do not” (Wooding, 2002). In the same interview, Jensen highlighted the continual influence of his education when he said, “My Reformation studies are with me every day of my life” (Wooding, 2002).

In 1985 Jensen became Principal of Moore Theological College, a role he would hold for more than fifteen years (Marr, 2008). Jensen took over from Knox, who gave his full approval to the appointment (Cameron, 2006: 287). Jensen would build upon Knox’s legacy. The college grew in the number of students enrolled, and Jensen displayed an aptitude for creating controversy that would later be a hallmark of his time as Archbishop. One clergyman interviewed for this thesis studied in the Preliminary Theological Certificate (PTC) course in the mid-1980s. He expressed outrage over Jensen’s approach, claiming, “Before Jensen became principal, [Moore College’s PTC course material] had a statement [that indicated] there were a number of ways to approach theology. When Jensen became principal, [he changed this so that] it said there was only one way” (Anonymous, personal communication, 20 September 2012). This is not the only allegation of Jensen using his role as principal to enforce a preferred theological approach. In his book *A Restless Faith*, Mascord recalled that lecturer Mark Harding was told there was no position for him at Moore, because he held that St. Paul might not be the author of the Pastoral Epistles (2012: 155).<sup>10</sup> Jensen’s time as principal of Moore saw him work to tighten the conservative evangelical ‘purity’ of the college. This was something of a preview of his time as Archbishop where he would declare one particular way of approaching scripture as being ‘Bible based’ implying the exclusion of certain other denominations (Porter, 2006: 11).

McGillion (2005) likens Peter Jensen's rise from the office of Moore College Principal to that of Archbishop of Sydney—and the subsequent changes he would bring to the Diocese—to another Reformation. This statement is hyperbolic; the diocese had long been conservative evangelical in outlook and had well established itself as distinctive to the majority of the Global Anglican Communion (Hilliard, 1997: 102). Furthermore, Luther and Calvin's struggles with the Catholic church of their day obviously eclipse any struggle on Sydney's part with the other members of the Global Anglican Communion in both scale and historical significance. Still, the event McGillion calls 'the Jensen ascendancy' stands out as a watershed moment, one that led to Sydney Diocese embracing an aggressively 'Protestant' approach. While the nomination of the new Archbishop ensured that the status quo remained for the diocese's women, the new Dean of St. Andrew's Cathedral, Phillip Jensen (nominated by his brother), would radically overhaul the historical church's vestments. Over time, a combination of conservative traditionalism (towards theological matters such as women's ordination) and 'principled radicalism' regarding church structures would come to be entrenched. As adumbrated above and explored below, one of the early catalysts for the Jensens' eventual rise was the formation of the Reformed Evangelical Protestant Association (RePA).

RePA formed in February 1992. To begin with it was a group of some twenty, primarily younger, conservative evangelical clergymen that met informally on Saturday mornings to discuss the present state of the Anglican Church in Australia—and what could be done to improve it (McGillion, 2005: 8). RePA intended to reform what they viewed as a moribund denomination, to make it what the group deemed to be more faithful to scripture and to bring the church more into line with what they viewed as the goals of the Reformation (McGillion, 2005: 8). They strongly opposed the ordination of women and wished to see the introduction of lay presidency, which allows church laity to preside over communion, a controversial suggestion as this is traditionally the task of an ordained minister. RePA's foundation statement spoke of the group's purpose as ensuring the future survival of the Anglican Church:

*We are a group of reformed evangelical Protestant pastors of churches in Sydney, who are dissatisfied with our Association of churches [that is, the Anglican Church of Australia] because of its*

*failure to: stimulate growth, develop resources, maintain evangelicalism, handle controversy, and spread and establish the gospel. Therefore we are meeting to try to rectify the weaknesses in our Association, whose place in our society is diminishing and whose integrity to our theological position is compromised* (Forsyth, 1994, cited in McGillion, 2005: 8).

The statement couches RePA's theology in parochial terms. Furthermore, this ginger group's relationship to the broader Anglican Church was expressed in separatist terms:

*The essential change that we need to make is to put our reformed evangelical theology (with its characteristic evangelical style of ministry) ahead of any denominational, institutional or vested interest at every level of our Association* (Forsyth, 1994, cited in McGillion, 2005: 8).

As founding member Bruce Ballentine-Jones later recalled, RePA's members exhibited "a certain revolutionary fervour" (McGillion, 2005: 10). This 'revolution' was intended to return their denomination to a singular focus on evangelism. Keith Mascord recalled one of RePA's 'colonels' informing him that the organisation's particular strand of Sydney Anglicanism "was defined by its passion to save people from hell and for heaven"; anything that distracted from this task was considered "suspect" (2012: 154). Mascord contends that RePA's stream of Sydney Anglicanism was "seriously lacking" a communitarian dimension. Its concept of evangelism had the primary intent of individual recruitment, while issues of personal morality were heavily emphasised, "to the detriment of issues of social, global, or environmental responsibility" (2012: 154). Critical to this style of Christianity was what an individual believed and, on a range of subjects, this was "deemed more important than what one does" (Mascord, 2012: 154). One possible consequence of this extended to RePA's tactics for dealing with those who disagreed with them as the group worked to cleanse and stack the boards of non-diocesan organisations in order to bring them in line with their own ethos. This campaign targeted the boards of New College (UNSW), Robert Menzies College (Macquarie University) and tertiary student groups

such as Scripture Union and the Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students (Mascord, 2012: 155).

Controversial actions such as these raised the ire of others within Sydney Diocese, some of whom met in July 1992 to form a rival group called Anglicans Together. Former Registrar of Sydney Diocese and founding member, Gerald Christmas, described this group's vision for church unity when he said, "We all have differences of opinion, but these don't mean we have to structurally divide" (McGillion, 2005: 10). One year later, at a 1993 Synod meeting to elect a new Archbishop of Sydney, the two factions were at the centre of controversy. While Anglicans Together favoured the moderate candidate John Reid, most of RePA backed founding member Phillip Jensen, then a successful parish minister and University of New South Wales Anglican Chaplain. Both men, as it turned out, would be unsuccessful. In a field of nine candidates, Harry Goodhew, the regional Bishop of Wollongong, became Archbishop as something of a compromise between the opposing groups. Stressing the need for unity and toleration within the diocese, Goodhew went on to have a difficult episcopate, attempting to unite Sydney Diocese after a blistering earlier debate surrounding women's ordination. Goodhew's time as Archbishop did not see the sweeping changes championed by RePA. The prelate instead focused on the unity of his diocese and on a number of social justice concerns such as challenging governments on Third World debt and indigenous reconciliation (McGillion, 2005: 71-72). Porter described Goodhew as "an irenic, softly spoken man who, as archbishop, always avoided the politics of confrontation and who worked hard to keep Sydney from adopting too separatist a position on potentially divisive issues" (2011: 99). This included vetoing a proposal to introduce lay presidency (Porter, 2011: 98). As a result of his approach, Goodhew experienced a strained relationship with RePA which, according to founding member Robert Forsyth, "went underground" following Phillip Jensen's defeat (McGillion, 2005: 26). Rather than merely disbanding, many RePA members became more involved with the well-established Anglican Church League (ACL), bringing their strategies and experience to that organisation.

As Goodhew's 2001 retirement loomed, Peter Jensen emerged as the candidate who garnered many of the former RePA members' votes, following on from his younger brother's unsuccessful campaign. For this group, the principal of Moore College and

vice president of the ACL shared much of their ecclesial agenda; he was strongly opposed to women's ordination and expressed a desire to see local congregations flourish (McGillion, 2005:74). He had already proven to be effective, having successfully extracted a moratorium on debate surrounding women's ordination for the remainder of Goodhew's leadership (McGillion, 2005: 42). Jensen was a canny political operator who knew the value of being well connected:

*I've always regarded it ever since I was a teenager as my duty to be interested in the functioning of the diocese, to understand its committee system, to understand which are the important committees. I am perfectly proud to be a member of the ACL, for example, and have been ever since I can remember. I understand these things (McGillion, 2005: 75).*

In many ways, Peter Jensen's electoral campaign echoed Phillip's. He received 138 nominations for the role, including 36 names that had backed his brother's 1993 bid (McGillion, 2005: 72). While Peter Jensen was never a member of RePA, during the final vote he drew support from that group's members who also operated within the ACL. Jensen's nominators included the ACL's president, chairman, its treasurer and many of its council members (McGillion, 2005: 74). Tim Costello was one notable churchman who—in stark contrast with Jensen's supporters—expressed chagrin at the possibility of him becoming Archbishop. In an opinion piece published in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the then-president of the Baptist Union of Australia (and later World Vision Australia CEO) expressed concern that Sydney Diocese was headed down a radical path of sectarianism, influenced by the conservative forces behind RePA and the ACL. Costello wrote:

*The recently retired Sydney Archbishop, the gracious Rev Harry Goodhew, acknowledged that he had failed to render his diocese less "arrogant, polarising and aggressive" in its relations with other churches. He may have had in mind that group of Anglicans within his diocese, which belongs to the Reformed Anglican Protestant Association (RePA) and whose reading diet includes the militant paper *The Briefing*.*

*This paper has attacked Pentecostals, Catholics, the Uniting Church and more recently myself as president of the Baptist Union of Australia (2001).*

The president of the Baptist Union also predicted that Peter Jensen would fulfil the original intent of Phillip Jensen:

*Peter's tone is regarded as milder than Phillip's but his beliefs are similar. He esteems his brother as a prophet and receives nearly a third of his ministry students at Moore College from Phillip's church. Hence, if Peter is elected archbishop, the danger is that Phillip's influence will be entrenched (Costello, 2001).*

Peter Jensen was widely recognised as inhabiting the conservative theological and radical ecclesial discourse of his brother, Phillip. Returning to the trope established in *Graving Another Testament's* introduction, whether this was regarded as being a force for good or ill depended on the constituency. This dual-sided reputation made itself known during the final stage of the June 2001 vote to determine Archbishop Goodhew's successor. When Jensen's name appeared alone in the final stage of voting, having outlasted all other candidates, his supporters hoped their candidate would be approved by consensus. This ambition was frustrated. While the motion to make him Archbishop elect was carried by a long margin, there was a sizeable minority that had voted against it (214 voting 'yes' to 25 voting 'no' was the tally among clergy, while the laity voted in favour of Jensen by a margin of 336 'yes' votes to 80 'no' votes) (McGillion, 2005: 83).

Still, Jensen was voted Archbishop elect; with this he could finally begin to prepare his, RePA's and the ACL's agenda for the Sydney Diocese—but not without some opposition. To the surprise of several commentators, Jensen's earliest press conference after being invited to become Archbishop included a broadside aimed at Prime Minister John Howard for his handling of reconciliation with Australia's first peoples. Jensen began the press conference by telling reporters assembled at St. Andrews House that he wanted to stake his life “on the resurrection of Jesus Christ

from the dead,” claiming that this should be the subject of the news. Despite this, and his mentioning the resurrection three times in 516 words, it was his comments on reconciliation that carried the majority of coverage (McGillion, 2005: 92). While he opined that the Prime Minister was “well thought out”, Jensen argued that:

*...I think he has a view, which, unfortunately, is not communal enough. I think his view is too individualistic and should be a recognition of the Christian understanding, which is that we belong together and we do things together and have a joint responsibility for things (McGillion, 2005: 92).*

The communitarian concern of Jensen’s comments broke somewhat with the individualistic emphasis of his former RePA allies. The Archbishop received mixed responses from commentators and the speech led to a rebuttal from the Prime Minister (himself a Sydney Anglican). This was not the last time Jensen commented on politics along these lines—as is explored in Chapter Four’s discussion of Australian politics, Jensen’s later comments attacking the Work Choices industrial relations legislation draw on a similar communitarian ethic (West, 2005). Jensen’s first press conference would not be the last time that the new Archbishop stoked controversy and offence. During the Deep Impact youth rally held at Homebush on 19 August 2001 Jensen argued that Wollongong’s multicultural population, including those who were Buddhist, had been brought to Australia by God so that they could be evangelised (McGillion, 2005: 104). As well as being a break with interfaith relations, this comment was the subject of an angry reply from the New South Wales Buddhist Council’s Graeme Lyall, who told the *Sydney Morning Herald* that there was “no way any Buddhist could be swayed by the superstitious ravings of a fundamentalist Christian” (McGillion, 2005: 104-105).

Jensen’s public rhetoric was already distinguishing him as a controversial Archbishop, vastly different to his irenic predecessor. He was also developing considerable cachet. Despite the controversy stemming from Jensen’s early press conference, Prime Minister John Howard still attended Jensen’s induction along with then-Opposition Leader Kim Beazley. The consecration proved to be a relatively low-key event. In a break with tradition, Jensen wore a black chimere over a rochet rather



than the traditional elaborate ceremonial garment worn by Archbishops (McGillion, 2005: 95). In his sermon, Jensen invoked Matthew 28:19, promising that he would use his authority to follow Jesus and “make disciples of all nations.” As it turned out, Jensen’s vow was not mere restatement of the Christian tradition of evangelism but was rather a signal of his ambitious—and, again, controversial—plan to blitz Sydney with his ‘Bible-based’ presentation of the Gospel. This Mission, as it would come to be known, in many ways defined the early portion of Peter Jensen’s time as Archbishop—and arguably helped bring about a financial crisis that rocked the diocese years later. More information and analysis regarding this crisis, and Archbishop Jensen’s response, can be found in Chapters Four and Seven. Before reaching this point, the thesis explores another subject close to Jensen’s heart, that being Moore College, the theological training institute where he served as principal for six years. Before that, though, is a small analysis of the rhetoric of Archbishop Jensen’s younger brother, Phillip.

### **Phillip Jensen**

Phillip Jensen’s written and spoken contributions to Sydney Anglican discourse are worth examining. The former Dean of St. Andrew’s Cathedral and long-time UNSW Anglican Chaplain was a frequently published writer and church planter, and—as noted above—was nominated in an unsuccessful bid for the Archbishopric in 1993. His profile in the diocese therefore mirrored that of his older brother, the former Archbishop and Moore College principal. Phillip’s rhetoric stylistically departed from Peter’s by being bolder, and at points blunt. This analysis explores and attempts to account for this difference in communication styles. In so doing, it is not intended to be an exhaustive account or career retrospective of the prolific figure, but rather interrogates particular aspects of his work and life as they relate and contribute to the formation and shape of Phillip Jensen’s blunt signature rhetoric.

As Lucy Woodling wrote in an article for UK Catholic website *The Tablet*, Phillip Jensen’s “extreme statements as writer and preacher are notorious” (2002). As the Woodling piece goes on to mention, such statements are visible in Jensen’s co-authored book, *Have Evangelicals Lost Their Way? And Other...Stuff* (1991), where one particularly incendiary sentence reads, “Whenever Protestants and Roman

Catholics get together for some joint expression of faith, be it a carol service or an Easter rally, evangelism is set back and the preservation of Christians is hampered” (Jensen and Payne, 1991, cited in Woodling, 2002). Sticking to the topic of Roman Catholicism, in the same book, Phillip Jensen also describes that denomination as “institutionalised unbelief” (Jensen and Payne, 1991, cited in Woodling, 2002), and, on another occasion, allegedly described Mother Teresa as an instrument “of the devil” (Woodling, 2002). In his first sermon as the Dean of St. Andrew’s Cathedral, he broke with more sensitive approaches to religious differences, arguing that Hindus, Muslims, and Jews “cannot all be right” and “if wrong are the monstrous lies and deceits of Satan” (Porter, 2006: 13). If certain allegations are correct, however, Jensen’s most bile-filled invective was reserved for members of his own denomination. In 2004 The *Guardian*’s religious affairs reporter Stephen Bates wrote that Jensen accused then-Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams of “theological and intellectual prostitution”, for his personal views condoning homosexuality (Bates, 2004, cited in Porter, 2006, 130). While the then-Dean of Sydney claimed he had been “grossly misrepresented”, a statement written in his defence nonetheless revealed that he had called for Williams’ resignation over the matter (Porter, 2006, 130-131). Needless to say, suggesting that the most senior Bishop in the Global Anglican Communion resign did little to quell the controversy, and served as a moment emblematic of Sydney’s worsening relationship with other parts of the Global Anglican Communion. These examples, and the controversy they caused, demonstrate the extent to which Phillip Jensen eclipsed his older brother, himself no stranger to the occasional unwanted headline. A number of commentators have elegantly made this same comparison. In the 1993 election to determine the next Archbishop, Tim Harris made a speech based on his experience of having worked with Jensen, in which he described the latter’s leadership and personality as “polarising”, a factor that prevented him from being suitable for the Archbishopric (McGillion, 2005:14). It appears that Sydney Diocese did not have this same concern about Peter’s 2001 election. Prior to this event, Tim Costello observed that, “Peter’s tone is regarded as milder than Phillip’s” (2001). In an interview, Porter took this line of thinking further, opining that Peter Jensen was the mild version of his younger brother (M. Porter, personal communication, 5 January 2013).

The origins of Phillip’s blunt rhetoric are better understood by examining the public record. As was the case with Peter, his argumentative style was influenced by his upbringing. As Phillip recalled in an interview with Tony Payne for *The Briefing*, “I grew up in a family of brothers. We fought a lot, and I grew up through debating and arguing [...]” (Jensen and Payne, 2012). While this admission explains, in part, the Brothers Jensen’s passion and skill in the art of debating, it does not explain the above noted difference in tone between the two brothers. The older Jensen brother possessed rare communicative prowess. As Porter noted, the former Archbishop is uniquely skilled at crafting his message to the particular demands of his audience (M. Porter, personal communication, 5 January 2013), and “has revealed himself to be a shrewd, confident media player, contributing to all manner of public debates and conversations with great personal charm and a level of accessibility both admirable and rare in church leaders” (2011: 18). That Phillip was less gifted in these areas, and thereby more prone to gaffes is perhaps to be expected due to the rare nature of Peter’s attributes. Furthermore, in the Payne interview Phillip indicated that being aware of audience is an area he has always struggled with. Describing his clash with the popular emergence of the charismatic and Pentecostal movements in the 1980s, Jensen recalled that, “I was being too harsh in what I was saying because I was misreading the people who I was speaking to” (Jensen and Payne, 2012).

Mascord offered another explanation. The former Moore College tutor and Sydney Anglican minister claimed that during a one-week mission to Jensen’s church, St. Matthias Centennial Park, he found that:

*Phillip was deliberately provocative in his preaching with an acknowledged preference for hyperbole, believing this was how Jesus preached. He preached in black and white. Though he may privately have seen some greys, he wasn’t at all interested in preaching them. And that was attractive to those who became his disciples. Every issue was simple, because Phillip made it sound simple (2012: 137).*

If Mascord’s assessment is accurate, the hyperbolic nature of Phillip Jensen’s rhetoric was the result of a conscious design choice, aimed at instilling a particularly “black

and white” conservative evangelicalism in his devotees. Indeed, the eschewing of doubt was evident throughout Phillip Jensen’s utterances, and his conclusions were grounded in rational certitude. The Payne interview served as a potent example of this occurring in Jensen’s rhetoric, and, as such, is worth considering in detail here. In this interview the former Dean described exegesis in absolute terms as being a process of unveiling truth. One instance of this was his reasoning for why he abandoned his prior held commitment to nonviolence. Jensen told Payne, “I was a pacifist for some years, and again that’s a hopeless position, because you can’t be a Christian pacifist and worship the ‘God of armies’ (which is what the ‘Lord of Hosts’ means). And you can’t make sense of punishment or the Cross if you’re a pacifist” (Jensen and Payne, 2012). Jensen made a number of short, judgement statements including, “you can’t make sense of punishment or the Cross if you’re a pacifist”, an argument that he did not justify. Instead, the statements served as an appeal to common sense. The statements featured none of Peter’s penchant for strategic ambiguity, and were short and stark in structure. Of the fourteen words in the former Dean’s final sentence, for example, twelve were monosyllabic. This response lacked the polish of Peter Jensen’s comparably longer, carefully constructed multiple clause sentences, and served to exemplify the differences between the two brothers’ rhetorical styles.

In terms of discursive repertoire, Phillip Jensen’s interview saw him engage in conversation with his frequent collaborator Tony Payne. The piece featured in a publication that Jensen himself founded; a crucial detail because this fact ensured that the former Dean would not be harangued, and that the questions would be framed by the interviewer’s admiration for his theological framework and ministry. Similarly, Jensen could be assured that *The Briefing*’s readership was of a similar theological persuasion to his own. As such, his responses to Payne drew on shared, theological reference points. For example, Jensen’s argument that a pacifist cannot understand the Cross assumes that the believer in question subscribes to the Penal Substitutionary model of the Atonement; an interpretation of the Cross as an event in which Christ takes the punishment intended for sinners on their behalf (Weaver, 2001: 2-3). As later examined in Chapter Four, Substitutionary Atonement was largely developed by St. Anselm of Canterbury, and is currently held as the popular understanding of the Atonement amongst conservative evangelicals in Sydney. This, however, is not the only way that the crucifixion of Jesus is interpreted within Christian theology. For

example, J. Denny Weaver commends the Narrative Christus Victor model as a “thoroughly nonviolent alternative” (2001: b.c.). That Jensen drew a link here between “punishment”, “the Cross” and the Atonement arguably demonstrates the role that violence—perpetrated towards Christ on behalf of sinners—serves within Substitutionary Atonement theory. Weaver has criticised Substitutionary Atonement theology for relying on the Western concept of retributive justice. This, he argues, “assumes that doing justice consist of administering quid quo pro violence—an evil deed involving some level of violence on one side balanced by an equivalent violence of punishment on the other” (Weaver, 2001:2). That Phillip Jensen, an influential figure in Sydney Anglican discourse, casually dismissed pacifism as incompatible with a correct understanding of the Cross, served to reinforce this understanding of justice as the meting out of punishment. It follows that Jensen’s interview delegitimised nonviolence as an ethical commitment for Sydney Anglicans to consider.

In another theologically contentious statement, Jensen’s tone appeared to change. The former Dean expressed what might, on first reading, indicate openness towards being corrected. He recalled how:

*Since College, I've changed my mind on lots and lots of little issues. I've also changed my mind on lots of Bible passages—so I learnt the framework of expositional preaching and exegesis of the Scriptures, but I thought I knew what was in the passages before I actually did the exegesis. But then I discovered in a great many cases that the passages did not say what I thought they were going to say; they said something different. And so I needed to change my mind (Jensen and Payne, 2012).*

A closer reading of the above passage demonstrates that, while changing his mind occasionally, in the main Jensen’s intellectual and theological position remains grounded in certitude. The area in which the former Dean was said to have changed his mind was in regard to: “lots and lots of *little* issues” (Jensen and Payne, 2012, emphasis added). Using the adjectival premodifier “little” to describe them, he indicated their relative insignificance. In describing his changing approach to

particular Bible passages, Jensen made reference to “expositional preaching and exegesis”, theological jargon that would be familiar to his Sydney Anglican audience, versed as they are in a rationalistic approach to reading scripture. In describing his experience of exegesis as determining the real meaning of a text, “they said something different” requiring him to change his mind. In doing so, Jensen demonstrated epistemic certainty in suggesting he can rationally know and exhaustively determine what a given text *means*. That arriving at the meaning of ancient texts is a task of notorious difficulty, and (as Chapter Three explores) that talented and capable exegetes genuinely arrive at widely different interpretations, was not evident in Jensen’s description of the exegetical process, an omission that arguably demonstrates his alleged commitment to “black and white” theology (Mascord, 2012: 137). Further, as Jensen went on to tell Payne, “I should say that nothing of huge significance has changed since I came out of college” (Jensen and Payne, 2012), demonstrating his ongoing commitment to the theology he originally learnt decades earlier at Moore Theological College.

Despite the above-noted, undeniable differences in rhetorical style, the careers of the Brothers Jensen were so close as to be deemed symbiotic. While Phillip’s attempt at the role of Archbishop was halted, Peter’s subsequent election in 2001 brought about many of the changes his younger brother had agitated for during the life of RePA, including a focus on the importance of individual congregations and a strong evangelism campaign. Peter’s October 2002 nomination of his brother for the role of Dean of St. Andrew’s Cathedral, however, is widely considered emblematic of the extent to which the Jensens’ fortunes were tied. To ensure that the Chapter, the Cathedral’s governing body, could debate the motion “freely and without constraint”, Peter Jensen absented himself from the room (Burke, 2002, cited in Porter, 2006: 159, Figure 1). This gesture, though, could not prevent accusations of nepotism. Joe Pilone, an 85-year-old congregant of over twenty years, told the *Sydney Morning Herald* that the Jensens’ pervasiveness in the diocese was “medieval”. Pilone also said that he could no longer worship at the Cathedral, due to his objection to Phillip’s appointment (Burke, 2002). Pilone is not the only person to have expressed consternation over the Jensens’ predominance. In an interview conducted for this thesis, Director of the St. James Ethics Centre Simon Longstaff observed that Jensen’s episcopate was dogged by the impression the diocese had become

“dynastic”, as a result of the promotion of Phillip to the role of Dean and Catherine Jensen (the wife of the Archbishop) to a women’s ministry role (S. Longstaff, personal communication, 22 November 2012). In another interview, held late in the Jensen episcopacy, Kirby took this line of thinking further. The former High Court Justice opined that:

*The Sydney Diocese, rather like the executive government of the Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, is greatly influenced by a family. That is rather unusual. It’s led to journalists making jocular references, likening Sydney to Barchester Towers. I don’t think it’s good that too many members of any one family get too many offices in either church or state. Office should be spread. It should be spread everywhere, not concentrated. It’s like Vegemite in that respect* (M. Kirby, personal communication, 29 January 2013).

The concentration of Sydney Diocese’s high offices to the Jensen family has led to Peter and Phillip being closely associated in the minds of many—for better or worse. This close association recalls the manner in which Phillip, as Dean, executed what might be deemed a shared conservative theological and radical ecclesial agenda. This included making some drastic changes to the cathedral, discarding the traditional Sunday Choral Evensong service and replacing it with another programme now known as City Night Talks, jettisoning the traditional priestly garb of the cassock, scarf and surplice, and making considerable changes to church liturgy. These amendments were described, variously, as a dumbing down of the cathedral (Burke, 2002), a vandalising of Anglicanism (Crittenden, 2008), and as part of a wider refashioning of the role of the Dean into the moral conscience of the city (Burke, 2002). Much like his older brother, Phillip Jensen used the authority of his office to make controversial changes. While he was viewed differently by different constituencies, it is undeniable that he left an indelible mark on the edifice of St. Andrew’s Cathedral.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has augmented analysis of Peter Jensen's carefully crafted rhetoric by comparing it to the less careful rhetoric of his brother, Phillip. While more could be written about Phillip Jensen given his central role in shaping much of the diocese's theology, this chapter has only considered Phillip Jensen's rhetoric briefly due to the constraints of this thesis. The primary finding is that the younger Jensen eschewed his brother's academic phraseology and strategic ambiguity, the latter of which may result from Peter's unique communication skills, Phillip's confessed lapses in his capacity to read an audience, and his preference for hyperbole.

In spite of their differences in rhetorical style, the Brothers Jensen shared a close professional relationship and common ministry, to the extent that they are mutually associated with the same, radical ecclesial and conservative theological agenda. This shared agenda, it has been seen, was the driving force for much of Archbishop Jensen's episcopate. As widely as Phillip Jensen's career is associated with his brother's episcopacy, this has implications for how his enduring legacy will be remembered. As the concluding chapter to this thesis explores in greater detail, the 2013 election of a new Archbishop means that generational change is at work in Sydney Diocese. For his part, Phillip Jensen announced on 6 July 2014 that he would depart the cathedral's ministry at the end of that year. Having introduced "possibly even more changes than during the last century" to the life of the cathedral, Jensen outlined his intention for "a new younger Dean with fresh energy to take us forward from here" (Powell, 2014). Whether or not Phillip Jensen's controversial influence upon Sydney Diocese will remain intact after his retirement is yet to be seen.



## Chapter Two: The Powerhouse—Moore College and Sydney Anglican Discourse

### Introduction

With names including Peter Jensen, D.B Knox, and Nathaniel Jones, the Principals of Sydney's Moore College have often been individuals whose work is considered central to the theology and life of the diocese. The college has expanded considerably over the past forty years, taking over a set of shops, an old office block, a pub, and a row of terraces (Marr, 2008). Apart from its sheer physical presence on the corner of Newtown's King Street, this institution stands as a colossus in Australian theology with D.B Knox shaping much of the church's binary understanding of gender, and former Moore principal and erstwhile Archbishop, Peter Jensen, working to entrench this interpretation. The college is also host to the biggest theological library in the Southern Hemisphere with close to 300,000 works in its collection, including some rare texts. Apart from the profile of past principals and the vastness of its resources, Moore College exercises influence over Sydney Anglican discourse in a profound and direct way. In order to be ordained in Sydney, a ministry candidate *must* graduate from there. This chapter examines Moore College in light of its influence with a particular focus on the institution's role in shaping and promulgating Sydney Diocese's conservative evangelical discourse. As will be seen throughout, the college's growth has not been without controversy. While it is often held in high regard amongst its graduates, and praised in conservative theological circles, Moore has also been accused of imparting too narrow an understanding of what views might constitute 'sound' biblical hermeneutics. The college has also been criticised for encouraging homogeneity amongst its graduates. This chapter analyses many facets of Moore College, including the college's living arrangements, curriculum, think-tank, student experience, and the activities of Moore graduates who have taken what they have learnt into ministries. This is undertaken so as to ascertain how Sydney Anglican discourse is at work within the four walls of the college—and how this is maintained and reified. The chapter reveals the college as a powerful institution with Moore graduates flung as far afield as Melbourne and Armidale—Anglican dioceses to

which Sydney's strand of Anglicanism has spread, and where its impact is felt acutely by clergy and congregants.

In order to explore Moore College for its institutional modalities and the reputation it has garnered, it is necessary to begin by revisiting the concept of the institution. As explored in the Introduction, French historian Michel Foucault is the most renowned scholar to have explored this subject matter. Foucault illuminated how institutions and governments work to produce the kinds of subjects they desire. This work proves instrumental here. Perhaps the clearest example—and one that Foucault himself chose to explore in *Discipline and Punish*—is that of the prison, where the subjects—prisoners—are re-produced as 'reformed' citizens, capable of interacting with society in socially acceptable ways. A related Foucauldian concept is 'governmentality'. A portmanteau of the words 'government' and 'mentality', this term is used to describe the organised practices (including mentalities, rationalities, and techniques) through which subjects are governed (Mayhew, 2004). Foucault offered several interconnected definitions of governmentality including "the contact between the technologies of domination of others and those of the self" (1988: 19, cited in Abercrombie, Hill, and Turner, 2006: 173). Universities and colleges make for fascinating study into governmentality in action: archaic institutions of learning with codified rules and means of producing subjects suitable for discourses such as academia and the professions. Stuart Macintyre touches on this institutional modality when he describes progression through universities as requiring students and budding academics to undergo a "rite of passage" (in Hamilton and Maddison, 2007: 58). As such:

*(senior academics control the award of the doctoral degree, and then the process of recruitment to a university post), and every subsequent stage of an academic career (promotion, publication, the approval of new courses, the award of grants, election to an academy) [...] It is a system based on merit, but it excludes the non-academics and lays itself open to accusations of privilege, favouritism and intolerance (Macintyre in Hamilton and Maddison, 2007: 58).*

While the express purpose of universities is to educate students and to promote and

explore ideas, an element of indoctrination often becomes apparent. In *Voltaire's Bastards*, philosopher John Ralston Saul argues that business schools such as The Harvard Business School and France's École Nationale d'Administration (ENA) provide their students with training that "is designed to develop not a talent for solving problems but a method for recognizing (sic) the solutions which will satisfy the system. After that the established internal logic will provide all the necessary justifications" (Ralston Saul, 1992: 21). A similar trend is noticeable in theological colleges. Stephen Mattson identifies this in a piece titled 'Christians: It's NOT a Sin to Change Your Beliefs' (2013) on the *Sojourners* website:

*Theoretically, Christians can go from preschool to seminary hearing the exact same religious doctrines. Theologies are often considered too "valuable," "right," and "holy" to change or question. Therefore, pastors debate instead of dialogue, professors preach instead of listen, schools propagate instead of discuss, and faith-based communities ultimately reject any form of honest questioning and doubt. Indoctrination is preferred over critical thinking, certainty is favored over doubt, and we expect our leaders to offer black-and-white answers. A change of theology is viewed as weakness, poor exegesis, and a sign of insecurity (2013).*

It is because of this process of ongoing indoctrination that certain theological colleges make fascinating subjects for analysis of governmentality. One notorious example is Bob Jones University (BJU) in Greenville, South Carolina, a college that purports to be "a biblically faithful, liberal arts university focused on educating the whole person to reflect and serve Christ" (Bob Jones University website, 2013). A mission statement included on this website signposts the college's fundamentalist Christian discourse, "Strengthening faith in the *absolute truth of God's word*" (Bob Jones University website, 2013, emphasis added). In keeping with this BJU governs all aspects of student life with strict rules of conduct.<sup>11</sup>

While not nearly as strict (or fundamentalist in its approach) as BJU, Moore College has a similar objective insofar as it aims to produce ministry candidates fluent in the particular conservative evangelical discourse that *Graving Another Testament* is

devoted to analysing. The college website describes this with the mission statement “Moore College prepares men and women for a lifetime of ministry and mission through in-depth theological training” (Moore College Website, 2013). This chapter seeks to discern how Moore College might achieve this aim. With a close eye towards Moore’s dual reputation, the next section explores some of the College’s institutional features in light of how these might ‘produce’ future clergy who align themselves with Sydney Diocese’s agenda and profess its desired approach to theology.

### **Moore College: The Centre of Sydney Diocese**

Moore Theological College first opened in Liverpool in 1856, drawing on the bequest of Thomas Moore, a businessman who intended its use for the “education of men of the Protestant persuasion.” The College moved to its current Newtown site in 1891 (Jensen, 2012). The move, initiated by Bishop Alfred Barry, enabled Moore’s students to take advantage of lectures at the nearby University of Sydney (Judd and Cable, 2014). Moore has since enjoyed several boom periods of high enrolments and theological output, such as the tenures of Nathaniel Jones (1897-1911) and Knox (1959-1985). Under the latter’s leadership, Moore’s library grew to the point that it became the largest collection of theological literature in Australia (Cameron, 2006: b.c.), and in 1960 “had the most men in any Australian theological college sitting for the final examinations” (Cameron, 2006: 201).

Under Knox, Moore developed an emphasis on a particular conservative evangelical, or biblical theology, described in Chapter One. This theology was closer to Calvinism and particularly centered on the idea that the ‘church’ was the local meeting of believers (Porter, 2006: 48) and that the “mission” of the church was preaching in this parish setting (Cameron, 2006: 225). Evangelism would take on a yet greater importance in the college’s program, and Knox began a new mission that students and staff would undertake each year (Cameron, 2006). As Cameron wrote, “The college which Broughton Knox created, on the foundations others had laid, was firmly committed to preparing men and women for ministry by teaching them to know the God of Scripture so that they could make Him known” (2006: 289). The college also became known for focusing on debate. As Hilliard recalled, students at Moore during this time “were introduced to theological argument and counterargument to an extent

that was unusual in Australian Anglican theological colleges” (Hilliard, 1997: 103). Nowhere was this more evident than in Knox’s own lectures, where he would use the Socratic method of stimulating discussion by asking questions. Where students’ answers departed from his own opinions, Knox would engage them in vociferous debate. These exchanges could prove to be bruising affairs. Phillip Jensen previously said that he enjoyed the intellectual jousting, but conceded that the lectures could be hurtful to the more sensitive students (Cameron, 2006: 199). This emphasis on debate remains evident in the college’s contemporary curriculum. A recent unit description for the first year undergraduate subject, Evangelistic Ministry, informed prospective students “the purpose of this unit is to enable the student both to *defend the truth and to persuade others* in a culturally appropriate manner” (Moore College Website, 2013, emphasis added). Evangelism and ministry were framed in the college’s course descriptions as activities that involve debate. Similarly, the unit description for the first year subject Youth Ministry Foundations framed its preparation of students for youth ministry in rational terms, “the purpose of this unit is to enable students to *think through* foundational issues in the practice of youth ministry” (Moore College website, 2013, emphasis added).

While Moore’s official communications emphasise intellectual autonomy and freedom of inquiry, allegations persist that college culture and policy serve to quash independent thought where this might be seen to depart from certain theological norms. Much like the diocese for which it trains clergy, Moore has a dual reputation: regarded variously as a first-rate theological college that encourages students to freely engage in rigorous study in exegesis on the one hand, and as a narrow-focused school that encourages conservative homogeneity amongst its graduates. Such duality was evident in competing assessments of the college’s program offered by former students and staff. Andrew Errington is a Moore alumnus who graduated in 2012 and went into ministry. He has expressed a high degree of satisfaction with his experience at the college. In a post on his blog *Deacons and Dragons*, Errington outlined the college’s virtues. As this post was reproduced on the college website, it can be understood as not merely representing Errington’s own independent perspective, but also the official image that the college intended to project. Interestingly, the blog post described the college’s task in terms of openness and ways of understanding scripture anew:

*It is the perennial failing of systematic theology to assume it already knows what the Bible says when it does not. The reason it does not is because we never do. God's Word has and will always have fresh news for us. Our systems are never final. We are and can only ever be catching up with Scripture [...] there is very little tolerance at Moore for a dogged allegiance to systematic formulations. Moore is a reformed college; but that's not its first loyalty. Calvin is a hero; but he's not the Messiah (Moore College Website, 2013).*

Errington's description appeared to confirm Moore as a place of theological and scholarly diversity, an environment where thought "systems are never final" and students were encouraged to explore scripture independently. Further, in an interview conducted for this thesis, the former Moore lecturer Keith Mascord said the college's staff was more diverse than the student body, and that students were encouraged to explore external institutions for their future postgraduate studies (K. Mascord, personal communication, 6 December 2012). And yet, in keeping with *Graving Another Testament's* enduring trope of dual reputations, Mascord also criticised the college for promoting a narrow theological method and for silencing dissenting voices to ensure that candidates are only exposed to those theological perspectives that accord with the diocese's dominant view. This criticism was unusual given his status as a perennial diocese insider with access to the discursive resources and channels afforded to an ordained minister. For example, in 2006 Mascord penned an open letter to the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Sydney, for consideration at its 11 December 2006 meeting. Having taught at the college for fifteen years, he wrote the open letter in order to raise concerns that the diocese was garnering a reputation for arrogance, and that it no longer tolerated or encouraged dissenting points of view.<sup>12</sup> As someone recently employed by the diocese, in good standing with its members Mascord felt that he "could therefore speak with some authenticity and insider knowledge" (2012: 162).<sup>13</sup> This suspicion was apparently vindicated, as Mascord received responses from some 332 people, with "all but a handful" expressing "support for the letter's call" (2012: 161-162, Figure 152).

Several sections of the open letter applied Mascord's broader critique of the diocese to Moore College in particular. He alleged for example that he had heard many

“stories of students and graduates of Moore College who bull-doze their way into situations because they think they know best; they have the formulas they believe will work best, regardless of the situation, regardless of whose feelings and opinions are disregarded in the process” (Mascord, 2006, in Mascord, 2012: 237). In Mascord’s opinion such arrogance was an unwarranted flaw. While praising Moore as a “a fine college with many strengths”, he went on to criticise its pedagogy for drawing out theological or doctrinal points without “an equally rigorous exploration of the history that lies behind and beyond the text—leading all too often to simplistic and formulaic approaches to preaching and application” (Mascord, 2012: 237). He also expressed concern about a questionnaire that the college trialed among third year ordination candidates, asking them detailed questions about their theological perspectives. While the questionnaire text assured the participants that some theological diversity was acceptable, on a number of unspecified issues “greater unanimity and clarity of conviction” was required (Mascord, 2012: 237). Furthermore, one question asked students whether it was acceptable for a woman to preach to mixed audiences. Given the diocese’s strong opposition to women’s ordination—with prominent figures such as Phillip Jensen apparently accepting opposition as the *only* acceptable view on the topic—Mascord believed that the respondents experienced “pressure to tick the acceptable box, a pressure that would only increase if answers on other questions are likely to put students out of the mainstream” (2012: 238).

Calling for a more humble diocese, where open and respectful debate could flourish, the open letter made several recommendations. Those relevant to the college included relaxing the requirement that diocese ministers be trained at Moore, a suggestion that a Task Force review “the need for and form of” the controversial questionnaire for third year ministry candidates, and a recommendation that “the Council and Principal of Moore College be encouraged to create and maintain a healthy mix of viewpoints on Faculty” (Mascord, 2012: 239).

While Mascord felt respected in the diocese’s official response to the open letter, his actions did not lead to the widespread change he was calling for. Deemed to be serious enough to warrant consideration, the letter led to the formation of a sub-committee. During his meetings with this group he felt that he was not among enemies and had his concerns attentively listened to (Mascord, 2012: 165). However,

in the chapter of his book that explores the open letter, Mascord records his impression that former principal of Moore College, John Woodhouse, “had taken personally my criticisms of the diocese, and of Phillip and Peter [Jensen] in particular” (2012: 164). Perhaps due to Woodhouse’s close relationship with these men (Archbishop Jensen had appointed him principal, and Phillip Jensen was the Dean of the church he attended) “He simply could not see, or was unwilling to admit, the legitimacy of my call for a change of culture. Probably, he was too close to it, too much a part of it, too closely aligned to those who were creating it” (Mascord, 2012: 164). As Woodhouse’s apparent response might have foreshadowed, the sub-committee did not recommend changes to organisational culture or institutional structures. Instead, their report (which was presented to the 15 October Standing Committee meeting) made two recommendations: that the Archbishop take steps to encourage better standards of behavior by clergy and church workers, and that the church’s grievance procedures be examined (Mascord, 2012: 165–166). As Mascord opined, the first of these “targeted personal morality rather than issues of corporate culture”, while the second “could be read as implying a critique of my own chosen method of expressing grievance. Perhaps that was its intention” (2012: 165–166).

While it did not achieve a wider cultural change in Sydney Diocese, Mascord’s open letter was significant for its insider observations regarding the college’s propensity to engender theological homogeneity amongst its candidates and graduates. As it was written by a figure with close ties to the diocese, the open letter’s critique—particularly his concern over the college’s uniformity—cannot be dismissed as an attack from an outsider. Similarly, an anonymous former Moore student described how this dominant discourse emphasises biblical truth and marginalises those deemed not to subscribe to it, to such an extent that potentially anyone could be ousted:

*I found a general level of competitiveness and “you’re out till you’re in” that made college a hard and bruising place. A couple of conversations I had fairly early on knocked the wind out of me, so to speak. Friends and people I looked up to [...]were, I was told, “on the outer” and “not to be trusted”. When I asked why, it was on the basis of others saying that this should be their approach. I was shocked that the network had such a powerful effect. This wasn’t*



*people merely being “not liked”. They were considered dangerous, heretical, etc. with no basis I could see (they continue in fruitful ministry in the diocese now) (Mascord, 2012: 248).*

In a similar manner, Kirby criticised the college for fostering uniformity. This, it should be noted, was a criticism from someone who self identifies as “a true son of the Sydney Anglican tradition” (M. Kirby, personal communication, 29 January 2013). According to Kirby, the college seemingly refused to allow him to address students and faculty despite his expressed willingness and desire to do so. In an interview, he recalled:

*After I delivered my talk to Trinity College in Melbourne, I wrote to Moore College. I suggested that I should come again to the college. I’ve been there before. I said I would be respectful, would simply explain my viewpoint based on Five Uneasy Pieces. It would be something that should be available to teachers of theology, for the purpose of knowing your “enemy”. It would be useful and, in a university, as Moore College is presented, it should be mandatory to have a different point of view. But I haven’t had a reply. I sent a follow up letter. I don’t give up easily. I’m a Protestant. But there’s just an air of intolerance or is it arrogance? I suppose it must come from a sense that what I’m trying to say is a kind of heresy. Therefore, they won’t give a platform to it. But until you hear it, you don’t know if it is heresy or not. Even if it is heresy, then you should ready yourself, and your mind, to deal with it; to answer it, to challenge it. That is what Luther and the Anglican Church fathers like Cranmer demanded. But not Moore College (M. Kirby, personal communication, 29 January 2013).*

That Kirby, a well-known public figure of impeccable legal and intellectual credentials is apparently ignored by Moore—ostensibly for his views regarding sexuality—demonstrates the potential for Sydney Anglican discourse to foster in-groups and out-groups. The above-noted discursive trope of suspicion regarding individuals’ theological bona fides may extend to the makeup of Moore’s faculty—

Mascord alleged that Moore staff who veered from the marked bounds of theological orthodoxy suffered career setbacks for their intransigence. While the college's 2011 annual report listed "Freedom of Inquiry" as one of the college's institutional values (Moore College Annual Report, 2011: 32), Mascord described Mark Harding, Graham Cole, Bill Lawton, and Bill Dumbrell as falling out of favour with the college's management after they reached particular exegetical conclusions. According to Mascord, Harding was told there was no place for him on Moore's faculty, after he had questioned whether the Apostle Paul really penned the Pastoral Epistles, while Cole, Lawton, and Dumbrell were not asked back due to their strong support for women's ordination (Mascord, 2012: 154). This same exercise in theological control allegedly extends to the readings Moore students are prescribed for their coursework. Susan Emeleus is an honorary assistant minister in a Sydney parish, and convener of the New South Wales Women's Interfaith Network. When training to become a missionary in the Church Missionary Society (CMS), she underwent a year of study at Moore. Emeleus recalled her experience in an opinion piece published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* entitled 'Other ways of talking about the divine will take the church forward' (2008). She alleged that during her time studying at Moore College:

*Reading lists were distributed in each subject and lecturers would go through the lists and tell us which authors were sound and which could be omitted. Gradually I realised the unsound ones were the ones with which I resonated. I remain thankful for the lecturers at Moore College who bothered to point out the books that were unsound (Emeleus, 2008).*

The practice of deeming certain texts unsound appears to have backfired in Emeleus' case, drawing her closer to texts that presented alternative strands of theology. That Moore lecturers labelled these texts in this manner constituted an attempt on the part of the college, at the level of course design, to ensure students internalised a particular discourse.

The alleged narrowness of Moore's curriculum and suppression of particular perspectives is significant given the college's central role: in order to be ordained in Sydney, candidates are *required* to undergo theological training at Moore. In a 2009

*Compass* piece, the rector of St. Mark's South Hurstville Chris Albany said that it was "very difficult" to appoint a minister trained outside Sydney (Doogue, 2009). During the same program, Archbishop Jensen described the policy in terms of its convenience for the diocese; "We have a large number of people graduating from Moore College and, like most other dioceses in the world, we say 'well, first of all look for someone from within'" (Doogue, 2009). The former Archbishop's son Michael Jensen described the rationale for the policy in his 2012 opinion piece for the ABC's *Religion and Ethics* website. In 'Indominal Sydney? The challenge of Sydney Anglicanism' (2012a), he said the policy was "key to maintaining the evangelical character of the diocese" (Jensen, 2012a). Basing ministry appointments on Moore's turnover therefore ensures the continuation of Sydney Anglican discourse.

Further ensuring the careful incubation of this discourse are rules that extend into students' living arrangements. As is the case with many seminaries and theological colleges, Moore College's ministry candidates are required to live in college accommodation. As the college website instructs, "All single students are expected to reside in college for the duration of their course. Men reside in John Chapman House and women in a residence at 28 Carillon Avenue. Married students may apply to live in college housing" (Moore College Website, 2013). While some students may opt-out of these arrangements on compassionate grounds, this requires the personal consultation of the Principal. Perhaps tellingly, this information appeared in the section of the website devoted to Educational Philosophy, which only explored how Moore's students "Live in community", and made no reference to pedagogy. It is obvious that the requirement that students live in community is itself a philosophic commitment on the part of the college, one that ensures candidates literally inhabit the particular conservative evangelical discourse fostered there.

The requirement that candidates live on campus is one of the easiest methods of control to observe, particularly as it involves a degree of separation. One of the more prominent tropes of Sydney Anglican discourse is a predilection towards separatism, whereby the diocese understands itself as "a gathered community of true believers and forgiven sinners, separated from "the world" as far as possible and searching for a life of personal holiness" (Hilliard, 1997: 103). Hilliard traced the Moore College history of this sectarian concept taught back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. According to

Hilliard, this trope of Sydney Anglican discourse enjoyed resurgence during the 1950s, and has remained prominent since (1997: 103). Parsing Moore College's modern communications output shows its ubiquity. While the college website extols the benefits of the "vibrant community that we're located in" (Moore College website, 2013), the 2011 annual report described the majority of faculty staff as residing in "Newtown, with its daily reminders that the world is in rebellion against God" (Moore College Annual Report, 2011: 13). While the authors' exact meaning was unclear, the comment demonstrated that the sectarian frame remained entrenched within the college, with all of the implications that this had for the training of new ministry candidates.

Another noteworthy trope of Sydney Anglican discourse is a binary understanding of gender, which finds theological expression in the concept of complementarianism. As Chapter Three explores, contemporary church gender debates continue to be influenced by Knox's work. Moore College's more recent communications reveals that Sydney Anglican discourse's binary understanding of gender continues to inform and shape the college's teaching and research output. The college's 2011 annual report listed "Gender Complementarity" as a "biblical" value to which it is committed (Moore College Annual Report, 2011: 32). This concept was defined in a short statement found in the report as:

*Affirmation of the fundamental equality and mutual dependence of men and women as image bearers of God, while recognising proper differences in roles and responsibilities in Christian ministry* (Moore College Annual Report, 2011: 32).

One institutional feature that particularly demonstrates Moore College's commitment to this 'value' is the use of special gendered services. According to the Moore College website, the institution "recognises the special needs of women" and a number of women-only chaplaincy groups exist to support these, addressing "many areas of ministry *and personal issues*" (Moore College Website, 2013, emphasis added). This description invoked the "Equal But Different" trope explored in detail in the next chapter. It emphasised the 'difference' between men and women that is significant enough to require distinct support services. That women are offered this additional

support in order to cover special needs that men are not said to possess arguably demonstrates the extent to which this trope presents women as being more needy than men. The additional clause regarding “personal issues” subtly furthers the impression that women are more relational and cooperative than their male counterparts.

While the provision of additional support services for women might be deemed to be encouraging female participation and representation in a male dominated environment (in a similar manner to workplaces offering childcare services), a further exploration of the college website demonstrates what might be a considered tokenistic, even disingenuous, attempt to draw on the rhetoric of inclusion. On a page entitled ‘Why Moore for Women?’ (2013), Moore faculty member Mark Fairfull attempted to demonstrate how integral women are to the life and shape of the college. He wrote that “Women have many opportunities to serve the cause of Christ after finishing college” (Fairfull, 2013), listing a long number of diverse roles for female graduates including assistant minister positions, refugee advocacy workers, and retirement village chaplains. Fairfull’s final contribution to this list was controversial, however, as he wrote, “And we mustn’t forget the ministry of motherhood” (Fairfull, 2013). Here, motherhood was described as a ministry specific to women, one to which female Moore graduates might aspire. In pairing the term “ministry”, with its connotations of church service through the preaching of the Gospel, with the term “motherhood” a social construct with assumptions of traditional gender roles, Fairfull associated the goodwill and status afforded to the former with the traditional subservience of the latter. Furthermore, by describing “motherhood” as a “ministry” Fairfull subtly implied that the realm of home life properly belonged within the church’s purview. How a woman raises her child in this “ministry” may therefore be considered a matter for the scrutiny of congregation members.

Another aspect of Moore’s program worth analysing for its contributions to church gender debates is the Priscilla and Aquila Centre, the college think tank devoted to the promulgation of complementarian approaches to women’s ministries. Headed up by Jane Tooher, the Centre promotes complementarianism through its theological papers and conferences. The Priscilla and Aquila Centre draws its name from a Roman Christian couple whose ministry is referred to in the biblical book of Acts, and St. Paul’s letters to the Romans and the Corinthians. As the Centre’s website said,

“Priscilla and Aquila are a wonderful example of faithful service together in the cause of Jesus Christ and their example has broad application to women and men together in ministry, so it is fitting that the Centre is named after them” (Priscilla and Aquila Centre Website, 2013). The use of Priscilla and Aquila’s names for the Centre’s title serves to coopt these biblical figures as complementarian archetypes. The website described the Centre’s purpose as “an initiative of Moore College [...] established to encourage and promote further thinking about the practice of Christian ministry by women in partnership with men” (Priscilla and Aquila Centre website, 2013). The implications for women’s ministry become especially clear after examining the website’s ‘About’ section, which described the Centre’s purpose as, “benefitting women and their ministries, but it intentionally avoids considering women and the ministries of women in isolation from men and the ministries of men.” Again, the conservative discursive trope of drawing on egalitarian language to ‘swaddle’ arguments that might otherwise be labeled oppressive—or in this case, sexist—was apparent. Here, the website’s statement drew on relational phraseology (in this case, avoiding isolation) in order to justify an asymmetrical relationship between men and women. While women’s ministries are “intentionally” held to not function “in isolation” from that of men, this same rhetoric regarding the need for ministry gender balance was apparently not directed towards men, held within Sydney Anglican discourse as inhabiting the “proper” sphere of church leadership.

Analysing the Priscilla and Aquila Centre’s output reveals more about its agenda. In 2014 the Centre promoted its annual conference. With the staunch opponent of the ordination of women Phillip Jensen keynoting, the conference explored the theme ‘Singleness, Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage in Ministry’. Electives included topics such as ‘Complementarian marriage myths busted’ and Woodhouse’s ‘Divorce and Remarriage: An Exploration of My Understanding of What the Bible Teaches on this Issue’ (Priscilla and Aquila Centre Website, 2013). Furthermore, in the 2012 Annual Report, Woodhouse described the Centre, writing, “I am not aware of anything quite like this Centre anywhere” (Moore College Annual Report, 2012: 16). Indeed, given Sydney’s distinct approach to the topic of gender and ministry, the Centre’s unique status is assured.

While the Priscilla and Aquila Centre is unique, so too is Moore Theological College in terms of its breadth of influence. Moore also provides theological training to ministry candidates from other likeminded dioceses, as well as candidates from the Continuing Presbyterian Church, and Baptists who identify with the Reformed tradition. According to the 2012 Annual Report, 29 per cent of the college's graduates went on to serve in non-Anglican churches in Sydney (Moore College Annual Report, 2012: 13). More controversial than these arrangements is the spread of Sydney Anglican discourse into other Anglican dioceses. According to the annual report, ten per cent of Moore alumni serve in other states, while seven per cent work in non-metropolitan New South Wales (Moore College Annual Report, 2012: 13).

Sydney's training of candidates from Armidale Diocese, one such non-metropolitan area, has a long and well-established history. Once fairly Anglo-Catholic in outlook, Armidale began to accept ministry candidates from Sydney. In an interview conducted for this thesis, Porter outlined the manner in which this occurred as not being a deliberate focus on Sydney's part. She went on to say: "I believe the story goes that the Bishop was desperate to get clergy to come to his diocese, and got people from Moore College, and he was warned at the time not to do that," before adding, "I think that was [...] a home-grown thing that happened" (M. Porter, personal communication, 5 January 2013). The result of this early incursion was a rural 'satellite' diocese that shares much of Sydney's conservative evangelical discourse. For example, Armidale is firmly opposed to the ordination of women, and assisted in the defeat of legislation at General Synods in 1985, 1987, and 1989 (Porter, 2011: 81).

Melbourne Diocese is another area that has acutely felt the presence of Moore graduates keen to impart their form of Anglicanism. In Melbourne, the Anglican Church accepts candidates from two theological colleges: Trinity and Ridley Melbourne. According to Porter, the latter is more conservative in its approach and a very powerful institution (M. Porter, personal communication, 5 January 2013). In recent years, Ridley has employed a number of former Moore staff. "There's a very strong Sydney input into Ridley College, which was not the case in previous generations," Porter said. "Leon Morris who was [...] principal of Ridley in its earlier days was a very strong promoter of the ordination of women, and certainly did not

follow that conservative Sydney line” (M. Porter, personal communication, 5 January 2013). According to Porter, as well as exerting influence over Ridley, Moore alumni have travelled south to accept parish placements, an arrangement that was in large part due to the influence of Melbourne’s former Archbishop Peter Watson. Serving from 2000 until 2005, Watson was previously a Bishop in the Sydney regions of Parramatta and South Sydney, and is himself a Moore alumnus. While uncertain about whether or not Watson had deliberately used his episcopate to change the tone and tenor of Melbourne Anglican discourse to one more similar to that of Sydney, Porter alleged that there had been a Moore College infiltration into Melbourne, deliberate or otherwise. “Certainly there were large numbers of Moore College people who came to Melbourne and took positions in parishes, and some people have described that as border smuggling,” she said (M. Porter, personal communication, 5 January 2013). Porter also said that this recent influx of Sydney Anglican discourse had changed the shape of Melbourne’s theology, bringing with it a more hardline evangelicalism:

*Evangelicalism in Melbourne was a very different style to Sydney, it was much more progressive and inclusive. Now, progressive inclusive versions of evangelicalism in Melbourne are few and far between. The evangelicals in Melbourne tend now to be conservative, in a Sydney style* (M. Porter, personal communication, 5 January 2013).

Porter cited homosexuality as one issue that demonstrated the shift in Melbourne’s evangelical discourse. The diocese, traditionally more progressive on the issue than Sydney, called for decriminalisation at a 1972 Synod meeting, a stance Porter described as “an extraordinarily progressive stance for a church to take” at that time (M. Porter, personal communication, 5 January 2013). After the influx of Moore graduates, Porter believed that Melbourne’s current debates about the issue are less productive:

*If we were to try and start a debate about homosexuality in Melbourne Synod, I just know it would be very damaging because it would be ugly. We wouldn’t get the same respectful debate, we’d get*



*some aggressive, hardline, young Turk evangelical types following in the patterns of Sydney Diocese, who would become extremely nasty, and it would hurt gay people* (M. Porter, personal communication, 5 January 2013).

Where Moore graduates have not joined established Anglican Churches in other regions they have deployed other confrontational approaches. As was mentioned in the Introduction, Sydney Diocese has supported the planting of independent churches in other dioceses. At times, Moore College graduates have been responsible for initiating these developments. For example, David Sheath formed The Lakes Evangelical Church at Berkley Vale on the New South Wales Central Coast. The church, which meets at a local school, has no affiliation with the Newcastle Diocese whose geographical boundaries it is located within. During the 2009 *Compass* episode referred to at the beginning of this chapter, Sheath outlined the reason he opted to form the new congregation. From his comments, it is clear that he intended to commend Sydney's particular conservative evangelical theology to Newcastle Diocese:

*My desire to start a church outside of Sydney came largely because I felt like Sydney was really well served with lots of good Bible teaching churches. You don't have to drive too far to be able to find a church that's really going to feed you from God's word. But I felt like I'd experienced in country NSW places where I just don't think you had that same sort of access. And so that's really what I wanted to do* (Doogue, 2009).

Sheath went on to admit that his church 'plant' caused consternation among the other churches already operating in the area. "I know that when something new starts it is always a little threatening in whatever area of life." Further, Sheath said, "I think with church planting there can be a feeling like, why is this guy coming and planting a church here? Is that a reflection on what he thinks of the churches that are already here?" (Doogue, 2009). At first glance, it would appear that Moore College was not responsible for the existence of churches such as The Lakes Evangelical—set up as these were through graduates' own initiative. Indeed, the websites of these churches often stress their independence from any denomination. This claim, however, is

placed on these sites despite their exhibition of doctrinal positions in accordance with those of Sydney Anglicanism, as taught at the college (Porter, 2011: 4). Furthermore, Ministry Training And Development (MT&D)—a popular course that many Sydney ministry candidates undertake before their formal theological studies begin—has a deliberate missionary focus. Phillip Jensen, through his previous role as Dean of Sydney, had a major role in the ideological development of students. Jensen is a staunch advocate of extra-diocesan church planting. He argued that, “restricting our ministries to one side of a road or a river or some other such artificial barrier and boundary can only make sense when we have confidence that the people on the other side of the boundary are being offered the same gospel.” In the absence of this “our obligation as evangelicals to all people will not allow us to remain silent” (Porter, 2011: 4). Phillip Jensen’s characteristically incendiary invective demonstrates that, if the former Dean’s views had any bearing on the students he encounters during their formation process, Sheath’s rhetorical question (“Is this a reflection on what he thinks of the churches that are already here?”) may be answered with a resounding “yes.”

## **Conclusion**

Moore Theological College has produced candidates deemed suitable for ministry in the Sydney Diocese. The learning environment stresses both uniformity and conformity to a particular conservative evangelical concept of biblical truth, one that has allegedly led to the creation of in-groups and out-groups on campus. Furthermore, this analysis has demonstrated a variety of ways in which the college shapes and propagates Sydney’s predominant conservative evangelical theological discourse—ranging from the requirement that students live on campus to the choice of staff and course literature deemed ‘sound’—to ministry candidates being encouraged to further this discourse’s presence in neighbouring dioceses. The chapter has therefore investigated what might be deemed ‘the incubator of Sydney Anglican discourse’—the place where the diocese’s particular strand of conservative evangelicalism is crafted and refined, before being thrust out into church congregations, schools, and further afield. Having investigated the college and its role in the development of the diocese’s theological stances, the next chapter explores one of the better-known and more contentious examples, namely the diocese’s conservative approach to the subject of gender.

## Chapter Three: Priscilla and Aquila—Complementarianism and Gender Issues

The Sydney Diocese has contributed to conservative evangelical ideology about the status of women in churches and worldwide debates regarding the ‘proper’ place of gays and lesbians in church life. Approaching these two topics in the same chapter, under the general heading of Gender Issues is not an incidental conflation. Nor is it intended to oversimplify complex and nuanced issues related to sexism and homophobia.<sup>14</sup> Rather, these issues are addressed in the same chapter for the reason that they are closely intertwined in Sydney Anglican discourse, and emerge as issues that define the differences between Sydney and other Anglican dioceses. Before delving into this chapter’s analyses, it is necessary to note here that—while Chapter Three includes some brief references to the experience and status of transgendered people within churches—this topic is not dealt with at any real length. While the diocese’s binary approach to gender, explored in depth below, may have consequences for how Sydney Anglicans approach the subject of transgender, it simply does not have the status or attention within Sydney Anglican discourse that is conferred upon the place of women or homosexuality. As such, the church experience of transgender and intersex people is ‘flagged’ here as a topic worth returning to for further research. With this in mind, Chapter Three begins by exploring the theological and exegetical dimensions of these issues. The chapter moves into an in-depth analysis of various articulations of the diocese’s official stances.

### **Gender and Sexuality: Sydney Diocese’s key issues**

Sydney Diocese’s dominant discourse tends towards a binary view of gender, assigning different roles to females than are accorded to males. Several commentators on the Global Anglican Communion’s division over homosexuality have proposed that this gender binary also leads to the marginalising of gays and lesbians as ‘others’, outside of a presupposed, even God-ordained norm (Mascord, 2012; Porter, 2006; Porter, 2011; Robinson, 2012). The most blunt articulation of this viewpoint came

from history's first openly gay prelate, the ninth Bishop of New Hampshire Gene Robinson:

*The thing that frightens men about homosexuality is that they think about a man allowing himself to be treated like a woman, and there is nothing worse, nothing so flying in the face of patriarchy than for a 'privileged' man, privileged by being male rather than female, to allow himself to be treated like a female (Karslake, 2007).*

Sydney Anglican leaders undoubtedly rejected Robinson's critique as having any application to their own ministry, insisting instead that their viewpoints regarding women and sexuality are exclusively derived from their fidelity to scripture (Porter, 2006: 121). As has been suggested elsewhere in *Graving Another Testament*, this is debatable, because scripture regarding the role of women and gays and lesbians in church life is thorny exegetical territory. While the hermeneutical approaches involved in this debate are discussed in Chapter Three, in the interim it is worth observing that, whether informed by sexism, homophobia, or scripture alone, Sydney Anglican discourse has long linked these gender issues. In 1973, the Sydney Ethics and Social Issues committee published an influential report regarding sexuality and the Bible. The report opined that homosexuality "defies the polarities of sex", and that gay and lesbian activists were demanding "nothing less than a radical new society", a threat that was "real and not imagined" (Porter, 2006: 119). A more recent example of this report's influence is found in Peter Jensen's 2000 address to the Anglican Church League, where the future Archbishop argued that "the *twin ideologies of the gay and feminist movements* [...] became far more important in shaping society than the teaching of the Bible" (Porter, 2006: 173, emphasis added). With this positioning of gay and feminist movements in direct opposition to scripture's teaching Jensen's rhetoric in this speech contained more than a faint echo of that of his forbears. This was coupled with his own technique of describing his perceived opponents' viewpoints in profoundly depersonalised and powerful terms.

Apart from resulting from the same gender narrative, Sydney Diocese's discursive frames regarding women and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) groups are often viewed as holding a similar degree of importance. Kevin

Giles argued that Sydney Diocese has made the subjugation of women the “great cause” (2004: 4). Porter’s critique of Sydney Diocese’s homosexuality stance took a similar tack. In an interview conducted for this thesis she described homosexuality in terms of a line Sydney had “drawn in the sand” (M. Porter, personal communication, 5 January 2013). Sydney Diocese’s refusal to join other Australian Anglicans in ordaining women is held with similar regard to its denunciation of the Global Anglican Communion’s acceptance of homosexual bishops. In keeping with *Graving Another Testament*’s signature trope regarding dual reputations, for better or worse these stances are widely regarded as emblematic of Sydney Diocese’s distinctiveness. For the majority of the diocese’s adherents, Sydney’s discourse regarding women and homosexuals demonstrate their adherence to true faith and sound doctrine, while other churches capitulate to contemporary social mores. For the diocese’s critics, they are examples of Sydney’s hardline approach. The contrast of perception here could not be starker.

With the above-noted dual reputation in mind, this chapter examines Sydney diocesan statements regarding gender issues. Before tending to this task, it is necessary to explore the exegetical and hermeneutical issues regarding the role of women, and the supposedly sinful status of homosexual acts. In terms of the scope of this thesis, this sketch is necessarily brief. It is nonetheless intended to enlarge on and inform the analysis in this chapter so that a number of theological implications might be examined. An important point of departure for this sketch is to acknowledge the fiendish complexity of biblical scholarship. While Christian fundamentalists stereotypically claim otherwise—one scholar recalled a car bumper sticker that read “God said it, I believe it, that settles it” (Sloane Coffin in Brueggemann, Placher and Blount, 2002: 1)—even the oft-repeated statement that the Bible is the Word of God has a number of complex implications. As William Sloane Coffin wrote:

*[T]he Bible is never self-evident or self-interpreting. It is a sacred book—after all, it is the founding document of every Christian church in the world. But, sacred in status, or is it also sacred in origin? Is it the Word of God or, rather, incredibly inspired words about God? Does it tell us about how God sees things or how*

*Jeremiah and St. Paul see them?* (in Brueggemann, Placher and Blount, 2002: 1).

One consequence of this lack of self-interpretation is that the exact role that a given text's broader historical and sociological context plays in its construction is a matter of widespread and strenuous scholarship. In a seminar paper published in *Struggling With Scripture*, the late William C. Placher observed that:

*...across a wide theological spectrum everyone agrees that you have to draw a line somewhere between the cultural assumptions in which the Bible is presented and the message that is presented in them. We argue about where to draw the line...but all parties [...] agree that a line needs to be drawn"* (in Brueggemann, Placher and Blount, 2002: 39).

Further complicating the matter of biblical interpretation is the influence of a reader's ethnicity, socioeconomic status, historical context and gender. This background is relevant to the gender issues explored in this chapter because it relates to the manner in which scripture is used to liberate or subordinate. Irene Monroe is a former Ford Fellow at Harvard Divinity School, and is a syndicated religious affairs columnist. In an interview featured in the documentary *For the Bible Tells Me So* (2007), she said:

*There are many meanings to any passage. You and I could read a different passage and get a different interpretation. And the reason for that, it has to do with our social location. I'm going to read the passage very differently than someone who might be white male, and straight and upper class. I'm going to read it as an African American who has a history of how the bible is used to denigrate Black people. I'm going to read it as a woman; the Bible has been used to subordinate women. I'm going to read it as a lesbian: another [...] use of the Bible to denigrate a group of people* (Karslake, 2007).

As Monroe's description of the process of interpretation suggested, theology is highly personal. Perhaps more than any other discipline, it has a unique propensity to ignite passions in regards to its treatment of the sacred and the manner in which believers conduct their lives. This ensures that theological and ethical debates are often rancorous. They are wide-ranging, and have consequences for Christian unity and the life of the community of believers, not the least of which are the numerous schisms that have taken place in the Church's 2000-year existence. The contemporary debates surrounding the place of women and homosexuals in church life have divided the Global Anglican Communion. This indicates that these gender debates have broader implications, including the way that a faith community interprets scripture. It is also important to note that these issues concern a small number of contentious verses.

Conservative Christians often justify their policy of not ordaining women to all ministries on key passages from the Pauline letters. These infamous passages include 1 Timothy 2: 11–15; “I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over a man, she is to keep silent. For Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet she will be saved through childbearing (NRSV).” The eminent Swiss theologian Karl Barth believed that this verse's order of creation, whereby man is created before woman, reflects God's priorities regarding the sexes (trans. in Bromiley, 1961: 309). In *Church Dogmatics Volume III*, Barth wrote, “The only real humanity is that which for the woman consists in being the wife of a male and therefore the wife of man” (trans. in Bromiley, 1961: 309). Similarly, in a wedding sermon penned in his Tegel prison cell, Barth's friend and occasional theological sparring partner, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, cast men and women in different marriage roles:

*A wife who wants to dominate her husband dishonours herself and him, just as a husband who does not love his wife as he should dishonours himself and her; and both dishonour the glory of God that is meant to rest on the estate of matrimony. It is an unhealthy state of affairs when the wife's ambition is to be like the husband, and the husband regards the wife merely as the plaything of his own lust for power and licence; and it is a sign of social disintegration when the wife's service is felt to be degrading or beneath her*

*dignity, and when a husband who is faithful to his wife is looked on as a weakling or even a fool* (trans. in Bethge, 1971: 44).

As this chapter later demonstrates, prominent Sydney Anglican leaders, including former Archbishop Peter Jensen, have echoed Barth and Bonhoeffer's gender viewpoints. Against this interpretative strand, however, a large number of writers, theologians and exegetes argue that understanding the context in which the Bible's 66 books took shape reveals that this need not be the only interpretation of scripture's depiction of gender relations (Baird, 2012; Campolo, 1988; Carter, 2009; Migliore, 2004; Porter, 2006; Porter, 2011).

One such theologian is conservative evangelical author and sociologist Tony Campolo. While retaining his belief that scripture is divinely inspired and inerrant (Campolo, 1988: 37), Campolo opined that Paul's prohibition of women speaking in church was an often-misunderstood and highly contextual act that was limited to the specific congregations and assemblies with whom the Apostle was corresponding. Campolo argued that Galatians 3:26's reference to women, men, Jews and Gentiles all being "children of God through faith" (NRSV) is the Apostle Paul's expression of newfound equality. According to Campolo, the passage demonstrated that the former Pharisee came to realise that "In Christ, the inferiority of Gentiles and women was abolished. All the privileges which hitherto were enjoyed only by men were now theirs" (1988: 40). Certain congregations however had problems enacting this new situation:

*It seems the women were abusing their new-found Christian freedom. The realisation [...] that women stood before God as equals to men had led them to be carried away into excesses that were both shocking and unkind. Many evangelical scholars contend that these women...were standing up in church meetings and putting down their husbands, giving them lectures on how they should behave. The humiliation of husbands whose shortcomings had been exposed apparently had become scandalous...[Paul] was simply declaring that...women should not abuse what they had in Christ's liberation by behaving in an unseemly fashion. Church was not the*



*place for them to try to teach their husbands what they should and should not do* (Campolo, 1988: 37-38).

That Campolo, himself a conservative evangelical, could interpret scripture in a manner favourable to women's ordination demonstrates that denominations including the Southern Baptist Church and the Sydney Anglicans ensconce themselves in their own unique conservative theological discourses. It also demonstrates the expositor's ability to make certain decisions regarding hermeneutics. In a widely syndicated opinion piece picked up in Australia by *The Age* entitled 'Losing my religion for equality', former United States President Jimmy Carter articulated this point while explaining why he chose to leave the Southern Baptist Church. He wrote:

*The truth is that male religious leaders have had—and still have—an option to interpret holy teachings either to exalt or subjugate women. They have, for their own selfish ends, overwhelmingly chosen the latter. Their continuing choice provides the foundation or justification for much of the pervasive persecution and abuse of women throughout the world. This is in clear violation not just of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights but also the teachings of Jesus Christ, the Apostle Paul, Moses and the prophets, Muhammad, and founders of other great religions—all of whom have called for proper and equitable treatment of all the children of God. It is time we had the courage to challenge these views* (Carter, 2009).

As this chapter later explores, the Movement for the Ordination of Women (MOW) have championed a similar exegetical approach and rhetoric concerning equality to that outlined by Carter.

Furthering the debate surrounding Paul's apparent condemnation of women's ordination is the question surrounding the authorship of key scriptural passages concerning women, including those noted above. As already noted in Chapter Two, some biblical scholars have proposed that St. Paul did not write the Pastoral Epistles and this implies that 1 Timothy does not have the authority of apostolic authorship.

Theologian Neil Elliott went so far as to label these books “pseudepigrapha, that is, writings falsely attributed to him” (Elliott, 2006: 25). According to Elliott, this false attribution was the result of “a campaign of deliberate revision of the memory of Paul” (2006: 29) by later authors to reflect the attitudes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century Roman Empire as they related to “gender and master-slave roles within the household, and the more favourable attitude toward civil government” (2006: 26). In particular, Elliott cited departures in the Pastoral Epistles from the Apostle’s vocabulary and theology as support for this theory. These include 1 Timothy 2:11-15’s call for women to remain silent in church—despite the Apostle outlining guidelines on what women should wear when they pray and prophesy in church in 1 Corinthians 11:5 (Elliott, 2006: 26).

In a manner similar to the debate about the status of women as depicted in the Bible, homosexuality is the subject of much exegetical debate and this debate is largely focused on some six or seven of the Bible’s 31,173 verses (Shore, 2012). One of the most infamous verses appears in Paul’s letter to the Romans. In a letter to mixed audiences of Jewish and Gentile Christians, the Apostle began his most theologically rigorous letter with a long account of the many ways that both groups have at times rejected God. While making this argument, the Apostle appeared to list homosexuality among the list of sins committed by the Gentiles. Romans 1:24–27 reads:

*24 Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the degrading of their bodies among themselves, 25 because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. 26 For this reason God gave them up to degrading passions. Their women exchanged natural intercourse for unnatural, 27 and in the same way the men, giving up natural intercourse with women, were consumed with passion for one another. Men committed shameless acts with other men and received in their own persons the due penalty for their error (Romans 1:24–27, NRSV).*

On a surface reading, this passage would appear to suggest that the Apostle Paul, an early convert to Christianity and author of much of the New Testament, was opposed to homosexuality. This apparently ensures that any churches that opt to ordain homosexuals (or perform marriage ceremonies for same sex couples in jurisdictions where it is legal to do so) contradict the precepts of their faith as outlined in their holy scriptures. This line of argument is one taken up by many conservative evangelical theologians. One of the most prominent contemporary examples is John Piper, who argued that the bible suggests that the concept of homosexual marriage was a contradiction in terms:

*The [...] biblical reason marriage cannot be between two men or two women is that, on the one hand, the Bible defines homosexual behavior as “dishonourable” and “shameless” and “contrary to nature” (Romans 1:26-27)), but on the other hand the Bible says that marriage is to be “held in honour” (Hebrews 13:4). Marriage does not produce shame. And marriage is not contrary to nature. There is therefore no such thing as homosexual marriage in the eyes of God. And there should not be in the eyes of his people—no matter what the state says (Piper, 2004).*

On the other hand, there are a number of theologians whose hermeneutics depart from Piper’s approach. They argue that the Bible’s passages concerning homosexuality should not inform 21<sup>st</sup> Century sexual ethics. William C. Placher was one such theologian. Placher made use of Charles Hodge’s theory that the Bible contains both the teachings and the assumptions of its authors. Hodge, principal of the conservative evangelical Princeton Theological College from 1851 to 1878, was an advocate for the inerrancy of scripture. Nonetheless, he argued that the biblical writers wrote with the assumptions and understandings of their time, and that the Bible’s teachings were entirely trustworthy (Placher in Brueggemann, Placher and Blount, 2002: 38). Despite admitting that Hodge never applied the theory to homosexuality, Placher found it a worthwhile one to consider in light of church divisions over sexuality (in Brueggemann, Placher and Blount, 2002: 39). Placher argued that the Bible’s authors assumed homosexuality was sinful, but that this repudiation was reflective of the Greco Roman worldview, and is not itself a focal point:

*Remembering the whole arc of Paul's argument allows us to raise a question: Is Paul teaching that same-sex intercourse is wrong? Or is he teaching something about the relationship between human responsibility, the failure to worship the true God, and in the process assuming, as a Jew moving into Hellenistic culture in the first century would have, that same-sex intercourse is a good example of sin? Is this last point an example of something taught, or is it an example of a shared assumption about a particular culture, taken for granted in the process of making a point about something else? (Placher in Brueggemann, Placher and Blount, 2002: 41–42).*

Similarly, the late United Methodist minister and widely respected liberal theologian Walter Wink promoted the concept that the Bible in fact contains no singular sex ethic, but rather reflects the sexual mores of the various cultures that existed during the writing of its 66 books. In the article 'Homosexuality and the Bible' for example, he observed that the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) refers to many sexual mores widely considered abhorrent in contemporary Western culture, such as polygamy and concubinage, with the New Testament condemning neither of these practices (Wink, 2010). Wink argued that in the absence of a singular sexual ethic, the Bible contains what might be deemed a "love ethic". Informed by this, he wrote: "Christians reserve the right to pick and choose what sexual mores they will observe, though they seldom admit to doing just that. And this is just as true of evangelicals and fundamentalists as it is of liberals and mainliners" (Wink, 2010).

Similar to the above is another line of argument maintained by a number of mainline and liberal Christians (Porter, 2006; Porter, 2011; Robinson, 2012; Shore, 2012). These scholars argued that, interpreted carefully with a critical eye to the context of first century Hellenistic culture, the New Testament does not actually condemn loving, monogamous same-sex relationships. One such figure is John Shore who on his website outlined the case against the Bible condemning homosexuality. According to Shore:

*In the times during which the New Testament was written, the Roman conquerors of the region frequently and openly engaged in homosexual acts between older men and boys, and between men and their male slaves. These acts of non-consensual sex were considered normal and socially acceptable. They were, however, morally repulsive to Paul, as today they would be to everyone, gay and straight (Shore, 2012).*

As part of his support for this argument, Shore cited *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (third edition revised, 2003), which in its section about homosexuality as practised in the time of Paul outlined how “the sexual penetration of male prostitutes or slaves by conventionally masculine elite men, who might purchase slaves expressly for that purpose, was not considered morally problematic” (cited in Shore, 2012).

With this broad sketch of the biblical terrain now complete, this chapter moves into an analysis of gender debates and their place within broader Sydney Anglican discourse. Sydney has long been a stronghold for conservative religious discourses regarding gender issues. While the exact historical and cultural reasons for this are the subject of conjecture, one theory already presented is that many churches have responded to the city’s wider culture of permissiveness with a particular conservatism. As Porter observed, with nicknames such as the Emerald City, and a vast degree of wealth, Sydney is known for a particular ostentatiousness and rebelliousness, “Flamboyance is a way of life, carrying with it a touch of the arrogant nose-thumbing at all forms of establishment, including formal religion, which is not far removed from the cheekiness of the convict” (Porter, 2006: 37).

Whether or not a response to this wider culture, Sydney’s religious discourse is deemed to be more conservative regarding gender issues than that of other Australian cities.<sup>15</sup> The first Methodist, Congregational, and Presbyterian Churches to ordain women were located in Adelaide, Melbourne and Perth rather than Sydney (Porter, 2006: 37).<sup>16</sup> More recently, Jensen’s unlikely alliance with former Archbishop George Pell was emblematic of commonalities that exist between Sydney’s conservative religious discourses. While Jensen obviously disagreed with his Catholic counterpart on many topics, on issues regarding women and homosexuality they

walked in lockstep. Despite this unity of purpose, the conservative religious leaders differed in how they articulated their positions. Pell described his unwillingness to ordain women to the priesthood as having its origins in Jesus' ministry, which apparently lacked any female disciples; a line of argument that Jensen did not take up (Porter, 2006: 92-93).<sup>17</sup> As this might suggest, Sydney Anglican discourse broadly fits its conservative religious context as it pertains to gender issues, but has its own unique tenor, vocabulary and history. Indeed, these issues occupy a significant portion of Sydney Anglican discourse to an extent that is unusual even amongst conservative Australian religious bodies. As Hilliard observes about homosexuality, for example, "Within Australia, no major religious body has so often discussed the subject [...] in its annual synod, passed so many resolutions on this subject, and campaigned so strongly against the decriminalisation of male homosexual behaviour" (Hilliard, 1997: 101).

While an exhaustive history of Sydney Anglicanism's stance towards women and homosexuals dating back to the early days of New South Wales colony would make for a fascinating study—and has ably been attended to by historians (Hilliard, 1997; Judd and Cable, 2014; Lawton, 1990; Porter, 2006; Porter, 2011)—such an undertaking falls outside the scope of *Graving Another Testament's* focus. In order to trace the development of the diocese's current discourse, however, at least some tracing of the discourse's development is necessary.

The tropes and frames of Sydney Anglicanism's current approach to gender were evident in the early days of the diocese. For example, the diocese opposed divorce legislation that came before New South Wales Parliament in the late 1880s. As would be the case more than a century later when the diocese publicly opposed same sex marriage, Sydney's Anglican leadership took a stand that saw itself out of step with wider public opinion (Lawton, 1990: 168). Much like the later debate about same sex attraction, Sydney's conservative opposition to divorce centered on the idea that it threatened the traditional family unit and that it was forbidden by a literal understanding of scripture (Lawton, 1990: 168).

In the wider context of a falling birth rate and Australia fearing that it would be vulnerable to Asian influence, the church rhetorically positioned women as rightfully fulfilling a scripturally ordained role as mothers (Lawton, 1990: 153). In the church:

*Women were seen as more moral, more spiritual, less assertive and less sexual. By creating a feminine mystique, women became the symbol of passive endurance, the guardians of Christian and civic morality. The middle-class home was the pattern for reshaping society, a 'divine workshop', where lives could be molded into faithfulness to their Master and to their character as the Bride of Christ (Lawton, 1990: 153).*

A particularly powerful example of the latter argument, that the Bible forbade divorce outright, was evident on 10 and 24 June 1888. When the Dean of St Andrew's Cathedral, Dean Cowper preached on the text of Matthew 19, he argued that "The words of Christ...in their plain, literal, and grammatical meaning...declar[e] that the marriage union is indissoluble, except upon the one ground so expressly and pointedly mentioned" (Cowper, 1888: 4, cited in Lawton, 1990: 170).

This stance came at a time when public sentiment was shifting and prominent women such as Mona Caird were calling for more liberal divorce laws, with Caird arguing in a controversial opinion piece that "the chain of marriage chafes the skin" (Caird, 1888, cited in Lawton, 1990: 171). As Lawton wrote, "Women's independence from the marriage tie was being signaled. It was Christianity's moment of crisis but the churchmen failed to support the new woman; instead they hung anxiously in the wings of power awaiting the outcome of legislative decisions they could no longer control" (Lawton, 1990: 171). Indeed, while the Divorce Extension legislation would be delayed by several years, no doubt due to the efforts of the Anglican leadership, it would eventually pass both houses of parliament in 1891, gaining royal assent the following year. In response, Sydney Diocese would "look inwards" as it now "had to be content with legislating for its own membership" (Lawton, 1990: 173). In one such internal move, the diocese adopted a new rule in 1918 that stipulated, "a member of the clergy may conduct the marriage of a divorced person (whose spouse is living) only where the former marriage is dissolved due to the infidelity of the other

partner...” (Porter, 2006: 31). This rule has a long, enduring legacy; it currently remains in place, decades after no-fault divorce was introduced in Australia (Porter, 2007: 31).

The diocese’s approach to the role of women in particular church roles and to homosexuality have a similar, traceable longevity. In 1921, Canon D.J Knox’s addressed the question of whether women should take part in church Synod meetings. At that year’s Adelaide Synod, Knox argued that the concept “was not in keeping with the spirit and letter of Holy Scripture, or even common sense” and that the presence of women would “reduce the manliness and virility of Synod” (Sherlock, 2008: 301, cited in Porter, 2011: 123, Figure 33). Knox’s son, the long term Moore College principal David Broughton Knox would go on to become an influential theologian, largely shaping the diocese’s contemporary theology towards gender issues in a manner that echoed that of his father.

In September 1973, the Sydney diocesan Ethics and Social Questions Committee released a long awaited report on homosexuality and scripture. As well as being a committee member, D.B Knox was a close friend of committee chair and Moore College lecturer Bruce Smith (Hilliard, 1997: 111). The report mainly focused on what the panel interpreted as biblical injunctions against homosexuality, with the sole point of practical application being that homosexuals “abide by God’s word” and seek professional help, in the form of aversion therapy. According to Hilliard, the report showed “little understanding of the life of homosexuals” (1997: 111). Its descriptors for homosexual relationships and acts were universally negative, drawing on loaded phrases such as “propensity” and “weakness”. At no point was the word “love” mentioned (Hilliard, 1997: 111). The chief recommendation was that homosexual acts—which technically incurred a maximum sentence of fourteen years imprisonment—should not be legalised. In recommending the status quo remain, Sydney Diocese departed from every other denomination’s report on the subject, which all recommended decriminalisation (Hilliard, 1997: 112). Sydney Anglicanism was positioning itself as more opposed to homosexuality than any other mainstream church, a hardline stance that was echoed many times in the life of the diocese. Knox followed up the report’s main recommendation during the 1977 Sydney Synod meeting by introducing a motion recommending that the diocese continue its



opposition towards decriminalisation. Arguing for the motion, Knox claimed that state laws against homosexual practices reflected “the Creator’s prohibition of homosexual acts, which is so strongly expressed in his Holy Word” (Porter, 2006: 120). The early boldness of rhetorical gestures such as this had real and long-lasting effect on Sydney Anglican discourse. According to Hilliard, they made it difficult for Sydney Diocese to alter its stance on homosexuality as to do so would risk losing face (1997: 116). Accordingly, this may be reflected in Archbishop Goodhew’s 1994 condemnation of the first televised broadcast of the Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, an action which the Archbishop and three of his assistant bishops had little choice. As Hilliard wrote, “in light of recent history, it would have been odd if they had not” condemned the event (1997: 102).

The improved status of women in Sydney Diocese has similarly been subject to similar discursive inertia, despite the efforts of certain congregations, and groups such as MOW, to gain traction. Knox again emerges as a central figure in shaping his diocese’s theological and rhetorical approach to the role of women in the church and home. In 1977, following the ordination of women in Anglican dioceses in Hong Kong, the United States, Canada, and New Zealand, the Australian Anglican Church’s General Synod resolved that theology was no barrier to women becoming priests and bishops (Porter, 2011: 123). This decision was the result of the General Synod accepting the findings of a major report into the ordination of women titled *The Ministry of Women: A Report of the General Synod Commission on Doctrine*. Chaired by Primate Sir Frank Woods, the report was prepared by a panel of prominent Anglican theologians in response to the changing role of women in Australian society (Judd and Cable, 2014). Of the twelve panel members, Knox was the only theologian who expressed objection to the ordination of women. At the time his minority report on the subject was emblematic of the arguments against women’s ordination that have now become entrenched in Sydney Anglican discourse (Porter, 2011: 123). It hinged on the already discussed binary understanding of gender, whereby God created men and women to have inherent differences. It held that God “gave a headship to man that He did not give to woman”, a relationship arrangement that was applicable “in every sphere of life” (Porter, 2011: 124). According to Knox, marriage was the area of life where “this relationship of headship and subordination is most clearly expressed and experienced” (Porter, 2011: 124). The then-Moore College principal

argued that this relationship was not abusive in nature, as men had “the obligation to take the lead in serving” and were tasked with “the true welfare of [women]” (Porter, 2011: 124). Such arguments therefore ‘swaddled’ the offense that might have been caused by simply arguing that women need to submit to men. By arguing that the arrangement was intended for the protection of women, Knox framed it as primarily caring. However, as Porter wrote:

*It can only mean that women are, at some level, child-like, needing to be cared for, protected and led. It implies inferiority and a certain helplessness on the part of women, assumptions that were once integral to patriarchal Western society. These are the very misunderstandings about women—and about the Bible—that the first (Christian) leaders of the modern women’s movement came together to tackle in the mid-nineteenth century (2011: 124).*

As is further explored below, the understanding of marriage as entailing women’s subordination informed Sydney Diocese’s new wedding vows that called for women to “submit” to their husbands. As this section demonstrates, Archbishop Jensen’s defense of this innovation contained Knox’s theology. Knox also ascribed immutability to the headship/subordination gender relationship, writing that, “This relationship was formed in the divine mind and attested throughout Scripture. The relationship does not change though the form of its expression may change with changes in culture” (Porter, 2011: 123–124). As has already been observed multiple times, reference to the unchanging nature of a particular social arrangement (in this case, gender binary relationships) is a common trope of conservative discourses in general, and Sydney Anglicanism more specifically.

As noted above, MOW arose with the goal of convincing Australia to follow the lead of Hong Kong, the United States, Canada, and New Zealand. While a national movement—closely modeled after a similar grouping in the Church of England now known as Women and the Church—the Sydney chapter of MOW is organised in a more active and structured fashion. According to the organisation’s website, which features an entire page devoted to Sydney MOW, the acceptance of female priests in other dioceses ensures that “where once MOWatch had active local chapters around

Australia, many of those now operate only as informal networks” (MOWatch website, 2012). Sydney MOWatch is an organisation with an urgent purpose perhaps not shared elsewhere. In an interview for this thesis, Sydney MOWatch member Bronslavia Lee said that this difference had led to the Sydney chapter being isolated from the others (B. Lee, personal communication, 4 December 2012). Despite this isolation—and the ubiquity of the binary view of gender discussed above—the Sydney MOWatch remains committed to spreading what is, within the diocese, a minority discourse. One of this discourse’s main frames is the understanding of equality as full and equal access to church offices for both genders. This discursive feature was evident in the organisation’s constitution, where the goal “to recognise, encourage and extend the ministries of women, and to see that the Church makes full use of them” featured under the subheading ‘The Objects of MOWatch’ (MOWatch website, 2012). Another central objective was to read scripture in its context. For example, in an opinion piece for the *Sydney Morning Herald*, former Sydney Synod and MOW member, Julia Baird, wrote:

*You might ask: if women in Sydney Anglican churches are not allowed to teach, preach or say intelligent things in front of men, why aren't they covering their heads? Why do some wear pearls, when this is forbidden? Why not call their husbands their lords and masters, as per 1 Peter 3:6? Why be so selective, and only tell them to be quiet? But the greater, more sobering question is this: how is it that in 2012, with most of the rest of the world ordaining women as priests, Sydney has continued to hold out—failing to recognise the Bible was written 2000 years ago and should be read and understood in context? (2012).*

This emphasis on the importance of cultural context for determining how the Bible is read—evident also in the earlier-noted theologies of Monroe, Campolo, and Carter—stands in contrast with Sydney Diocese’s predominant discourse’s oft-discussed appeals to the authority of scripture. As well as their website, Sydney MOW disseminates this discourse through a variety of means, including public forums and conferences, and direct engagement with mass media, such as media releases, and opinion pieces. Perhaps the organisation’s most direct communications tactic,

however, is the drafting and proposing of motions at the Sydney Synod. One recent example of this was a motion introduced by Bernard Stewart and Phillip Bradford at the 2012 Synod meeting, which read “Synod notes the 20th anniversary of the ordination of women to the priesthood in the Anglican Church of Australia and gives thanks for the ministry of women in all areas of the church’s life” (Baird, 2012b). This motion, however, was amended by Claire Smith, who deleted all words after “Synod” and added “gives thanks to Almighty God for the ministry of women in the church’s life”, an amendment that was upheld (Baird, 2012b). Such a moment served to illustrate the obstacles faced by minority discourses that seek to gain traction within the Sydney Diocese.

Another group of women known as Equal But Different formed in 1992 to counter the spread of MOW’s pro-ordination discourse. The group’s name derived from a mantra like phrase within Sydney Diocese. For example, after the 2004 General Synod voted against legislation that would allow women to serve as bishops, Archbishop Jensen proclaimed that the church had been faithful to scripture, as “the very book that brings liberation is also the same book that says ‘equal but different’” (Porter, 2011: 128). This phrase reframed the aforementioned notion of equality championed by MOWatch, an understanding that implied and advocated access to the same church roles. It also legitimised what MOW described as unequal church and marriage arrangements, benefitting from the goodwill associated with the liberal democratic notion of equality. Shaping and promulgating this message is the task of Equal But Different’s committee, which previously included Christine Jensen, who is married to Peter Jensen, and Helen Jensen, who is married to Phillip (Porter, 2011: 125). Populated with slick photos of mixed groups of young men and women, [equalbutdifferent.org](http://equalbutdifferent.org) was one channel through which this occurred. The website offers visitors a number of articles sympathetic to complementarian theology, a journal to which they may subscribe, and assistance in finding “a speaker on complementarian issues” (Equal But Different, 2011). The section ‘What We Believe’ unpacked the phrase Equal But Different, arguing:

*...[T]hat God’s purpose for humanity includes complementary relationships between the genders; that men are called to loving, self-denying, humble leadership, and women to intelligent, willing*

*submission within marriage; that within the church, this complementarity is expressed through suitably gifted and appointed men assuming responsibility for authoritative teaching and pastoral oversight; and that we unconditionally reject the use of God's purposes for marriage as an excuse for violence against women, whether physical, emotional, or spiritual...*(Equal But Different, 2011).

This explanation demonstrated the theological influence of Knox's minority report into women's ordination. Over forty years after Knox's report was submitted—and nearly twenty years following the death of its author—an almost verbatim reproduction of his arguments against women's ordination graced Equal But Different's website. Once again, the argument that men and women are distinctive beings designed for dichotomous roles was put in euphemistic terms, particularly through the use of the descriptors “loving, self-denying” and “humble” for men's leadership, and “intelligent” and “willing” for women's submission. As Porter argued, however, there is a use of self-sufficient rhetorical devices in the statement, as “It is not apparent just what loving male leadership means in this context, let alone intelligent and willing submission” (Porter, 2011: 127). The statement also does not explain how, or in what context, submission and leadership are to be exercised, and whether this is to be determined by each couple individually, or whether it means that a husband's view overrules that of his wife in a disagreement (Porter, 2011: 127). The softening of Equal But Different's complementarian message was furthered by the rejection of female submission being used to engender “physical, emotional, or spiritual” abuse (Equal But Different, 2011). The inclusion of this statement, however, highlights the potential for abuse within such a marriage where the submissive wife is expected to follow and adhere to her husband's leadership.

Archbishop Jensen made two major contributions to Sydney Anglican discourse regarding the role of women in church and home. As has already been explored, the first of these was his refusal to ordain women to the same roles as men. The second, which occurred late into his episcopate, was the creation of new optional wedding vows involving the ‘submission’ of wives to their husbands. Introduced in early 2012 and ratified at that year's October Synod meeting, the submission vows garnered

widespread coverage and commentary (Baird, 2012; Burke, 2012; Carlton, 2012; Glover, 2012). These new vows were crafted by the diocese's liturgical panel, which has the imprimatur of the Archbishop (Burke 2012). Insisting that the vows were not at all sexist, proponents invoked the complementarian frame: in this case, while men and women were equal in the eyes of God and the church, their difference necessitated different vows. Jensen drew upon this particular frame in a *Sydney Morning Herald* opinion piece entitled 'Men and women are different, and so should be their marriage vows' (Jensen, 2012a). Perhaps the most obvious invocation of this frame occurs in the fifth paragraph, where Jensen argued, "Since they unite not simply two people but a man and a woman—*two different bodies for whom marriage holds different consequences*, needs, expectations and emotions—the promises can express these differences, and traditionally have done so" (Jensen, 2012a, emphasis added). The then-Archbishop therefore gave reasons related to men and women's differing bodies, thought patterns and emotions (as well as the authority of tradition). This binary depiction of gender differences relied on a large body of popular literature, with titles such as *Why Men Don't Listen and Women Can't Read Maps* (Pease and Pease, 2001, cited in Arvanitakis, 2012a), *Why Men Don't Have a Clue and Women Always Need More Shoes* (Pease and Pease, 2004, cited in Arvanitakis, 2012a), and *Why Men Never Remember and Women Never Forget* (Legato, 2005, cited in Arvanitakis, 2012a). Taken on face value these books might indicate a field of neuroscience that supports Jensen's view of gender. Indeed, the former Archbishop draws upon this when he cites Patrick Parkinson's opinion piece that appeared in the previous week's newspaper (Jensen, 2012a). The 'science' behind such a binary understanding of gender, though, is hotly contested. For example, in *The Truth About Girls and Boys: Challenging Toxic Stereotypes About Our Children* (2011), researchers Rosalind C. Barnett and Caryl Rivers described the emergence of a new determinism, whereby books such as those mentioned above predetermine the future choices of boys and girls, with men naturally suited to leadership roles (Barnett and Rivers, 2011, cited in Arvanitakis, 2012b). Furthermore, Barnett and Rivers observed that the studies that supposedly confirm the inability of women to succeed in the technical arena failed to take into account the elasticity of the brain, that is, how the brain's circuits change in direct response to sensory stimulation. As such, women who are told that they cannot read maps are less likely to be able to do this activity with proficiency, and the researchers who carried out experiments to determine

gender competency sometimes failed to take such external factors into account (Barnett and Rivers, 2011, cited in Arvanitakis, 2012b). To summarise, the binary understanding of gender advanced in this piece—and Sydney Anglican discourse in general—was set on shaky scientific ground.

In the tenth paragraph of his opinion piece, Jensen wrote that the submission of a wife to her husband is not “an invitation to bossiness, let alone abuse” (2012a). He contended “A husband who uses the wife’s promise in this way stands condemned for betraying his own sworn obligations. The husband is to take responsibility for his wife and family in a Christ-like way” (Jensen, 2012a). Recalling Knox’s rhetoric, Jensen directly lifted this argument from the influential Moore College principal and theologian. Again, this argument served to ‘swaddle’—and thereby legitimate—the subordination of women, by appealing to widely agreed-upon ideals of how a husband should treat his wife. ‘Men and women are different, and so should be their marriage vows’ also featured the wide assertions already demonstrated to be a part of Jensen’s signature rhetoric, with the former Archbishop referring to philosophies other than his in depersonalised and dangerous terms. He wrote that, “Secular views of marriage are driven by a *destructive individualism and libertarianism*. This philosophy is inconsistent with the reality of long-term relationships such as marriage and family life” (Jensen, 2012a, emphasis added). Again, this is a point that Jensen did not substantiate, as he offered no reason or evidence as to how individualism or libertarianism constituted destructive forces (or of the exact nature of the destruction that they wreak).

Considering Jensen’s handling of the homosexuality debate again raises the matter of the former Archbishop’s dual reputation. At some points of his episcopate, Jensen displayed a willingness to embrace those of other viewpoints in relation to homosexuality. As Andrew West opined in a profile written for *The Monthly*, Jensen’s rise to the office of Archbishop did not result in any “witch-hunts against gay Anglicans that some expected” (West, 2005). While not substantiated by any examples, West highlights how Jensen did not agitate for Sydney Anglican churches to expel gay and lesbian congregants. As noted in the Introduction, the former Archbishop maintained correspondence with former High Court Justice Michael Kirby. In an interview conducted with Kirby, he described the Archbishop as “a good

man” with whom he had maintained a lengthy and respectful dialogue, based in part on an agreement to “agree to disagree” on the subject of sexuality (M. Kirby, personal communication, 29 January 2013). “When I saw something he had said about sexuality and Christianity, and the Anglican diocese, I wrote a letter to him,” Mr. Kirby said. “I’ve had an exchange with him since. Not many letters. None of them disrespectful. He has generally, although not always, answered. In the early days, he would urge me to stay with dialogue, and so I have” (M. Kirby, personal communication, 29 January 2013). One particularly memorable occurrence in this exchange happened when Kirby received “a remonstrance” from an Anglican minister calling for him to leave his partner Jan and “repent” (M. Kirby, personal communication, 29 January 2013). According to Kirby, when he wrote to Jensen about the incident, the Archbishop provided some support:

*He told me, that if it was of any comfort, the same priest had written similar letters of complaint and injunction to him. So we had that in common. It was a friendly correspondence. He had his point of view about sexuality. I had mine* (M. Kirby, personal communication, 29 January 2013).

Given the extent to which Jensen rhetorically positioned his episcopate in opposition to wider Australian social mores, including acceptance of homosexuality, such examples of Jensen’s occasionally irenic approach stand out as paradoxical. Kirby, however, noticed a shift over time in the former Archbishop’s rhetoric:

*Increasingly in recent years, I’ve noticed his statements and his stances seem to be more hardline about sexual orientation. He became one of the Anglican bishops who took an organising role in organising the alternative meetings to the meetings in Lambeth Palace organised by the Archbishop of Canterbury. He helped organise a meeting in Jerusalem, I think, with the Archbishop of Nigeria and others who were antithetical to homosexuals in the Anglican Church. So this was a point that divided us* (M. Kirby, personal communication, 29 January 2013).



While the division was not enough to end their correspondence, Kirby said that it was “painful, because I see myself as a true son of the Sydney Anglican tradition” (M. Kirby, personal communication, 29 January 2013). The “alternative meeting” referred to above was the Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON), a group consisting of likeminded conservative dioceses, most located in developing nations, who opted to boycott the June 2008 Lambeth conference in favour of their own held in Jerusalem. The appointment of Gene Robinson—the Anglican Church’s first openly gay bishop quoted at the outset of this chapter—was the main catalyst for this move. In undertaking this role in the formation of GAFCON, Jensen aligned himself with Peter Akinola, the fiery Archbishop of Abuja, who once described Robinson’s elevation as “a Satanic attack on God’s Church” (Marr, 2008). While Jensen occasionally distanced himself from Akinola, their alliance demonstrates the extent of the rift between Sydney and Canterbury during Jensen’s episcopate. During this time Jensen uttered his bluntest rhetoric on the subject of homosexuality. In his interview with Marr ahead of Lambeth, Jensen described Robinson’s consecration as “plain disobedience to the teaching of the Holy Scripture” (Marr, 2008). He also chastised his North American counterparts when he argued “I’m not saying to the Americans: ‘Pull your head in’. We said that five years ago, and that didn't work. They will do their thing. But if they do do that thing, then their freedom frees us as well” (Marr, 2008).

The former Archbishop’s bold and uncompromising articulation of his view of homosexual acts as sinful would again become prominent in the public sphere when the Australian Parliament debated same-sex marriage in 2012. In the lead up to the 19 September vote on a bill introduced by Labor MP Stephen Jones, Archbishop Jensen joined a large number of public commentators in commenting on the issue. He penned a *Sydney Morning Herald* column entitled ‘Stylish same-sex campaign glosses over real issues’. The former Archbishop’s broader rhetorical style is evident in the piece with his penchant for casting aspersions and the tactic of dehumanising an opposing side by describing them in terms of wider societal forces. Jensen wrote:

*The stylish and confident propaganda has become pervasive.  
Federal politics is in danger of being distorted. Those who are*

*doubtful or opposed have been tempted to remain silent rather than be accused of promoting hate* (2012b).

Jensen's use of the triadic structure (a favoured biblical pattern, and one common to religious oratory in general) once again reinforced his wider point; in this case that same-sex marriage poses real societal threat. The former Archbishop asserted that the issue had implications for the integrity of the nation's politics and democracy. Describing his opponents of running a "stylish" campaign, Jensen drew on an adjective that carries the connotations of being new and popular, but vacuous in the same manner that he dismisses "designer Buddhism" in his inaugural Synod Address (cf. Excerpt IX). Describing the Marriage Equality campaign in this way therefore leveled suspicion towards the new fad. This was in keeping with the trope of shunning new trends in lieu of traditional values and institutions central to wider conservative religious and political discourses (such as that of Sydney Anglicanism). Indeed, this conservative framing of marriage as a time-proven instrument of social cohesion was essential to the main thrust of Jensen's polemic. Another argument Jensen made in the column was that changing the definition of 'marriage' to allow same-sex unions would have consequences and adversely affect all marriages, including his own (2012b). This is of reasoning popularised by conservative religious and political leaders. Perhaps the most noteworthy example is author and counselor James Dobson, head of the conservative political action group Focus on the Family—who has no formal theological training. Dobson framed gay marriage as a threat using highly charged language. He once declared that "If the definition of marriage should change, the family as we know it will die, and with it will go everything else that sits on that foundation" (Karlsruhe, 2007).

While Jensen's language is far more sanguine than Dobson's, a similar frame was clearly evident in his piece's closing paragraph, when he argued "It would be better for us all if the law reflected *the truth human beings have always known. Social engineering cannot change realities as basic as these*" (2012a, emphasis added). Jensen again drew upon the "equal but different" frame outlined earlier in this chapter. This is most evident in the fourth paragraph, where he wrote "The reality of the world God made is that human beings are in two sexes, male and female" and in the fifth paragraph's short sentence "For marriage, that is supremely relevant"

(Jensen, 2012a). As has been repeatedly demonstrated, Jensen's other rhetorical offerings (such as the opinion piece explored above, 'Men and women are different, and so should be their marriage vows') revealed his understanding that creation manifests the will of God, including the existence of gender binaries. This is the main impact of the opinion piece as a social text: gay and lesbian people were marginalised and depersonalised, presented as constituting an inferior 'other', whose relationships were an affront to the majority, to society, and to the created order of male and female.

As the above paragraph suggests, the dominant Sydney Anglican discourse concerning homosexuality has potential to harm the lives of its subjects, namely GLBTI people. In the interview conducted with Porter for this thesis, the interviewee referred to the impact of the same-sex debate on homosexuals as "frightening" (M. Porter, personal communication, 5 January 2013). Reverend Jimmy Creech from the United States organisation Faith In America has made this same argument. In *For The Bible Tells Me So*, he told an interviewer that the Church "has created the climate in which gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender children growing up feel very much in conflict with the world in which they live. It really shapes their thinking so that they hate themselves, so that they internalise this judgement and condemnation" (Karlsruhe, 2007). According to Jorge Valencia from the Trevor Project Suicide Hotline, a not for profit organisation that provides over-the-phone counseling to teenagers contemplating suicide, this theory is borne out by the hotline's clients. He said "it's estimated that every five hours an LGBT teen takes his life and for every teen that takes his or her own life, there are twenty more who try. One of the top five reasons why teenagers call us is for religious reasons, they feel like there isn't a place for them and God" (Karlsruhe, 2007). While Jensen acknowledged that he was aware of this alarming trend, he constantly offered a different interpretation during his episcopate. In a 2008 profile written by Marr on the subject of the Lambeth boycott, Jensen argued that the sinfulness of homosexuality was itself the cause of the high instances of suicide attempts:

*I believe it is likely there is a natural feeling that there is something wrong here—it may be a natural feeling that may need to be challenged and all sorts of other things—that leads young men and*

*sometimes young women to have tremendous self-doubt, etcetera. This will occur, I think, in any case [...] There is something here that does call for a Christian response, namely to commit yourself to a life of chastity, which is a very hard thing. But I believe that is right and better for the human being (Marr, 2008).*

The recommendation that gays remain celibate was a common feature of Jensen's rhetoric. In 2005 he told Andrew West that a tendency towards homosexuality "is not very different to something like alcoholism. Someone may be genetically predisposed towards alcoholism but that doesn't mean they should get drunk" (West, 2005). Much like Dobson, Jensen likened homosexuality to a disorder.

Jensen was resolute in defending his diocese's official stance on homosexuality, often against accusations that he had contributed to the marginalisation—and perhaps even the higher suicide rate—of homosexuals. One particularly memorable defence occurred during the 10 September 2012 episode of the ABC's *Q&A* programme. Jensen was asked by audience member and Uniting World staff member Peter Keegan whether or not he agreed with Australian Christian Lobby head Jim Wallace, who had earlier that month claimed that homosexuality posed a health risk to gays comparable to that of cigarette smoking (Jones, 2012). Jensen responded by arguing that the shorter lifespan of practicing homosexuals was indeed a matter of concern. He complained that discussion on the issue had been restricted by "virulent censorship" and that he was concerned he was going to "get hit on the head for the next 100 years about it" (Jones, 2012). Jensen's response therefore drew upon a technique common to conservative discourses; appealing to agreed-upon liberal democratic ideals—in this case, freedom of speech—in order to justify statements widely considered offensive or illiberal (Augoustinos, Lecouter and Soyland, 2002).

In the same episode, Jensen also couched his language regarding homosexuals in humanitarian terms. He drew on his experience of seeing gay friends die, and called for a "compassionate and objective" examination of the issues surrounding gay men's health (Jones, 2012). While there is no evidence to suggest that the former Archbishop's statements were anything other than genuine expression of concern, he concluded that: "some people say it's because of the things I say and the position I

take and that creates, for example, a spate of suicides. That may be true but how can we get at the facts if we're never willing to talk about it?" (Jones, 2012) It appears, that Jensen was arguing not only that discussing homosexual lifestyle posed a high potential risk, but that it was worth perhaps risking homosexuals' wellbeing in order to discuss the topic.

Despite being occasionally disturbing, there is no denying the influence that Jensen's rhetoric has had on entrenching Sydney Diocese's conservative, binary view of gender. This success was undoubtedly the result of a deliberate effort on the former Archbishop's part. According to Stuart Piggin, this became apparent during a meeting between MOW and Archbishop Jensen on 10 April 2002. During this meeting, one woman apparently pointed out that in the last vote on women priests, the laity's vote was quite evenly split. Jensen answered: "I agree but I am going to work very hard to change that" (Baird, 2012).

At the time of writing, it appears that Jensen's legacy will remain untouched for the immediate future. Jensen named Mark Thompson—a former president of the Anglican Church League (ACL)—as the principal designate of Moore College in November 2012. This move was greeted with enthusiasm from the ACL, whose president Gavin Poole issued a statement declaring, "The college will be in *trustworthy hands*" (Poole, 2012, emphasis added). A premium is placed on the ability of the principal, not only to shepherd and ensure the college's viability but also to safeguard the theology traditionally promulgated there. Thompson clearly understands the significance of his role, which commenced in May 2013, in shaping the diocese's theology. As he once commented while still ACL president, "The simple truth is that the future of our diocese, under God, is not determined by what goes on in Greenoaks Avenue (Darling Point) but by what goes on in Carillon Avenue (Newtown)" (Poole, 2012). The consequences of this for gender issues within the diocese became apparent soon after the appointment. On 21 November 2012, Thompson uploaded an opinion piece on the ACL website commending the Church of England for voting down a motion allowing female bishops. The piece serves as a reminder of many of the tropes and frames explored in this chapter's exploration of Sydney Diocese's majority discourse concerning gender. The complementarian frame

that features so heavily in Archbishop Jensen and Equal But Different's rhetoric was central to this piece. Thompson argued:

*The teaching of Scripture on the distinction between men and women in the exercise of Christian ministry for the building up of the church and glory of Christ's name is not a time-bound relic of a bygone culture. It is God's good gift which (sic) enhances our unity and challenges Christian surrender to one of today's cultural juggernauts. It genuinely values women as opposed to devaluing them (2012).*

The conservative emphasis on the authority of scripture, evident in the above, is also featured in the subsequent paragraph:

*It would be genuine leadership if the incoming Archbishop of Canterbury took a stand with the teaching of Scripture against the pressure to move in this direction, no matter where that pressure comes from. Yet whatever happens, those who believe that what God has to tell us about men and women — how they should relate and how they should serve together among God's people — is good and wholesome and life-giving, should determine to build on what was accomplished overnight and take the courage to keep standing firm for biblical truth (Thompson, 2012).*

That Thompson—and by extension the dominant discourse he represents—is now ensconced in Moore College is reason to expect that the current generation of ministry candidates may reproduce this gender discourse as they enter their future ministries.

## Conclusion

Chapter Three has scrutinised the varying discourses concerning gender issues competing within Sydney Diocese. As discussed in the chapter's historical overview, the diocese's dominant, conservative gender discourse was informed in large part by the theology of the influential theologian and Moore Theological College principal Broughton Knox. The ongoing contributions of Moore College to the diocese's predominant binary understanding of gender—with all of its implications for the role of women and gays and lesbians in church life—continue to be felt, with principal Mark Thompson championing the status quo (2012). Despite this heavy opposition, the advocates for the ordination of women and a less hardline approach to homosexuality remain hopeful. One Sydney Anglican minister identified his belief that “freedom will come” and that women will eventually be ordained for all the same ministries as their male counterparts (Anonymous, personal communication, December 2012). In a similar manner, Michael Kirby predicted that the diocese would change its official stance towards homosexuals, and likewise embrace their ordination. The former High Court Justice uniquely compared the situation to the hermeneutical issues surrounding Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, originally a controversial issue, but now generally accepted by Christians, “I imagine that when Darwin came along and proclaimed his theory of evolution, Sydney would have put up a terrible fight [...] because it did create a big consternation in Anglicanism in England” (M. Kirby, personal communication, 29 January 2013).

The viability of Kirby's prediction—that the diocese will eventually adapt to contemporary attitudes regarding homosexuality (in the same manner as it apparently did evolution)—remains to be seen. For now, this stance stands out as one of the signifiers of what makes Sydney distinct amongst broader Australian society. Chapter Four is devoted to exploring how Sydney Diocese has handled its membership of the wider Australian public sphere.

## Chapter Four: Sydney Diocese and the Australian Public Sphere

*It's as if it wants to go back to those comfortable years in the 1930s, when the Anglican Church was the biggest and the best. It was 40 per cent of the Australian population. It flew the Union Jack and the Australian flag. It knew that it was the church of the monarch and Britannia ruled the waves. It sort of lost its way. It has lost its numbers. Then it started to do and say things that were out of joint with the times.*

Michael Kirby (M. Kirby, personal communication, 29 January 2013)

### **Introduction**

This chapter examines Sydney Diocese's role within the Australian public sphere with a particular focus on the diocese's evangelistic campaigns and political actions during Peter Jensen's twelve-year episcopate. These campaigns are located within the broader historical and cultural context of post-Christendom in general, and secular Australian society in particular. The chapter explores how Sydney Anglicans' profound frustration regarding the loss of the power and influence underpins these campaigns, particularly given the diocese's prior status as the early colony's largest church. It also analyses intense evangelistic efforts to reverse these losses in numbers and influence, with Archbishop Jensen devoting the early part of his episcopacy to the ambitious, but ultimately costly, Mission. Further, this chapter focuses on how the legacy of Christendom might shape diocese leaders' public statements.

Extending on these examinations this chapter considers how Jensen's political stances were informed by broader Sydney Anglican discourse. Here, as West (2005) explored, the former Archbishop cannot be neatly characterised as being right or left leaning in the traditional understanding of Australia's political spectrum. Instead, Jensen commented on a variety of social and political issues from his conservative evangelical viewpoint, revealing his concern for the health of communities, as well as



evinced conservative social stances. This, West argued, signified Jensen's involvement in a broader movement within Australian politics "away from the sterile Left-Right axiom and towards a new politics that elevates relationships above economics" (2005). Jensen stressed his political independence, entering and leaving debates regarding marriage, gay rights, abortion, industrial relations, and reconciliation as he saw fit. As this chapter also explores, the former Archbishop was ambitious in his goal to expand his diocese's public profile, with the Mission plan of gaining ten per cent of Sydney's population for the diocese standing out as unprecedented in scope—and unfortunate in the financial implications that became apparent later.

In order to consider contemporary issues regarding the current Sydney Diocese and its role within the Australian public sphere, it is necessary to briefly consider the characteristically vexed issue of the church's relationship with the state. As such, the following section below briefly explores the historical legacy of Christendom, and the theological implications the subject poses for religious discourses.<sup>18</sup>

### **Christendom and the Australian public sphere: some historical and theological context**

When Constantine the Great (Emperor of Rome from 306 until 337 CE) publicly converted, the result was the creation of what historians term Christendom. Christianity—previously a marginalised minority faith that had been subject to persecution and suspicion within the empire—came to enjoy powerful status as the official religion of Rome (Weaver, 2001: 83). As well as issuing the Edict of Milan, which returned confiscated property to Christians, Constantine called for meetings that led to the adoption of the biblical canon. Perhaps most importantly with relation to the chapter at hand, he gave churches exemptions from certain taxes. This led to a situation whereby a reigning Roman ruler viewed Christianity's God as the source of his imperial strength, and so as the Roman Empire spread into new territories, so too did the faith (Weaver, 2001: 84). A number of theologians have commented on Christendom's consequences for church teachings and Christian ethics, with Douglas John Hall standing out as one scholar particularly focused on the topic. In *Why*

*Christian?*, he wrote:

*Like most property owners, established religion grows more concerned for maintaining itself than in being a people with a mission to others. This, many would say, is precisely what happened to the Christian church when it exchanged its wandering, scattered (the technical word is diaspora), and never-quite legal status prior to Constantine for the status of official religion. What we call “Christendom,” that is, the dominance of the Christian religion (not of the Christ!), differs from the earlier forms of Christianity in the world chiefly by being highly institutionalized (sic) in ways reflective of the organization (sic) forms of successive Western empires, and so of tending to behave in imperialistic ways...(Hall, 1998: Chapter Six, para 62).*

According to Hall, following the advent of Christendom, the Church’s ministry became more inwardly focused, concerned primarily with issues regarding its own institutional wellbeing such as the number of its adherents and its ability to wield influence. Missiologist Glen Powell has argued that Christendom’s influence radically altered how the Gospel of Jesus Christ came to be understood, along with all of its implications for the life of the Church:

*The Christendom context turns Christ into an object of worship rather than a leader to be followed because Jesus creates trouble for the State. Jesus’ teaching is silenced. The gospel changes from ‘God’s news, like it or not’ to ‘good news’. Where Jesus taught discipleship and activism, the Christendom church teaches that Jesus has already achieved victory and completed the task on the Cross. Good works are appropriate, but these are restricted to works of charity that shore up the State, encourage better citizenship, or personal piety [...] Rahner argues that though the relationship between church and state is a constant struggle, the church must support the state unconditionally except “when there*

*was a danger of undermining the loyalty to a heavenly kingdom, to the kingdom of the only Lord” (1992, p12). This is a reversal of the order implied in the message of Jesus, which requires total and unconditional loyalty to God and allows loyalty to the State only where it coincides with the kingdom of the only Lord (Powell, 2005: 5).*

Furthermore, along with other exegetes (Wink, 1992; Cone, 1997), J. Denny Weaver argues that this church/state interrelationship meant the church abandoned its prior commitment to nonviolence, as practiced by Christ in the Gospels (2001: 84). Liberation theologian James Cone argues that, due to this imperial influence, the church’s classical Nicene-Chalcedonian creeds lacked an ethical dimension:

*Few, if any, of the early Church Fathers grounded their Christological arguments in the concrete history of Jesus of Nazareth. Consequentially, little is said about the significance of his ministry to the poor as a definition of his person. The Nicene fathers showed little interest in the Christological significance of Jesus’ deeds for the humiliated, because most of the discussion took place in the social context of the Church’s position as the favored (sic) religion of the Roman State (Cone, 1997: 107, cited in Weaver, 2001: 105).*

Due to its status as a state church, the above theological critiques of post-Christendom theology may also apply to the Church of England. As such, expedient as it may seem to bypass centuries of Christendom’s history, the next point of interest for the purpose of this brief sketch is this church’s separation from Roman Catholicism. King Henry VIII formed the Anglican Church in 1534 after the Vatican refused to annul his first marriage. Since then the British monarch has served as its symbolic head. Its enduring state church status is one of the few remaining elements of Christendom, the church having spread alongside colonialism into far-flung nations in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific region. Indeed, from the early days of the New South Wales colony until the 1980s, the Church of England (as it was called in Australia until 1981) was the

nation's largest denomination. This, Hilliard argues, was significant to the formation of Sydney Anglican discourse. In his assessment of Sydney Diocese, Hilliard argues that, due to its large numbers, the diocese previously "tended to act as if it were the established church, with the right to call the government to support its position by law" (1997: 102). Kaye (2008a) offered one concrete historical example. When Australia's second Archdeacon, W.G. Broughton was appointed in 1836, the Church of England enjoyed support not extended to Roman Catholics and Presbyterians. When this was changed by an act of the local governor, Broughton objected, appearing before the New South Wales Legislative Council "to claim that the state had a moral and constitutional obligation to support the Church of England because it was the true religion and the best protector of liberty" (Kaye, 2008a: 50). While Broughton could not prevent the spread of pluralism, as this chapter and Chapter Six explore, a particular sectarianism remains a part of Sydney Anglican discourse, with this being hardened by Jensen's exclusion of Catholic, Uniting, and Orthodox denominations from the description of "bible believing" churches.

Anglican Church attendance numbers have continuously declined in recent decades—a phenomenon experienced by the majority of Western churches. With Catholicism overtaking Anglicanism as the biggest religious grouping in the 1980s, the ability of the Sydney Diocese to influence the Australian public sphere diminished and altered in its form. According to the 2011 Australian Census, some 17.1 per cent of the national population now identify as Anglican, a drop from the prior survey, which saw some 18.7 per cent identify themselves as belonging to the denomination (ABS, 2012). While these were the national, rather than diocesan figures, it points to a significant decline—and may be indicative of a wider societal shift in the Anglican Church's public role. This is in keeping with broader trends in the Western World, with church attendance also declining across Europe, the United Kingdom, and North America.

Church leaders and theologians have been divided regarding the fall of Christendom, and whether it may actually be to The Church's benefit. Closely related to this decline in number has been the rise of secularism: a form of governance wherein the church is but one participant in public debates and in the framing and construction of a nation's laws. Now that its mission is not co-opted by the machinery of the state, some

contemporary theologians argue that these developments allow The Church to return somewhat to its pre-Christendom roots. Hall, for example, suggests that the decline of Christendom has offered churches a unique opportunity to reclaim *theologia crucis*—the theology of the Cross that was promoted by such prominent classical theologians such as Martin Luther—as their faith’s key signature. According to Hall, “Historical Christianity—Christendom—has steadfast (sic) avoided the *theologia crucis* because such a theology could only call into question the whole imperialistic bent of Christendom” (Hall, 2003: 6-7). Additionally, he argues that the present situation demands that churches rethink their mission, and bring their evangelistic efforts into line with their original purpose. In *Why Christian?*, Hall wrote:

*What is more important: that the whole world should become nominally and reluctantly Christian, or that some portion of the world in every age should live and teach real hospitality towards others—a hospitality that loves and serves others, a stewardly hospitality, that does not have strings attached and does not offer itself only on the condition that the others acknowledge the Christian sources of this hospitality? At least for the foreseeable future, the Christian message to the world will have to be indirect and implicit—not direct and explicit. After sixteen-centuries of Christendom “conquering,” few of the others, most of them victims of that conquering, are going to find the verbal testimonies of Christians as such either persuasive or trustworthy. What is required now is the kind of earnest and informed commitment to Jesus as the Christ that will be prepared, as he was, through self-sacrifice, voluntary suffering, and informed, disciplined service, to be Christians in the midst of the world (1998: Chapter Six, para 144).*

As discussed below, far from Hall’s optimism for a more authentic post-Christendom faith, from its position of declining influence Sydney Diocese arguably responded to the apparent demise of Christendom almost petulantly. Prominent leaders such as Peter and Michael Jensen have decried changes to the church’s role in the public sphere, as well as the decline in church membership, regular attendance, and prestige.

For example, to return once more to Jensen's inaugural Synod address in 2001, the incoming Archbishop made the dramatic statement that:

*Church-going Anglicans in Sydney are about one per cent of the population. We are becoming invisible. It is almost as unusual to have a friend who is a churchgoing Anglican, as it is to have one who is an animal-keeper in the zoo. We are poised to become exotic. Most people will never meet or know one of us; it is hard for our children to have sufficient friends to support them. How will our neighbours hear the gospel from us? (2001).*

The above text from Jensen's inaugural Synod address arguably pointed to the way Sydney Anglican discourse, along with much of the broader Church Universal, is influenced and shaped by its post-Christendom context and the anxieties that emerge out of the church no longer enjoying the size and status once conferred upon it. The incoming Archbishop signalled that his episcopate's focus would be numerical, ensuring that his church may remain 'visible' and carry out their task of bringing the gospel to their "neighbours".

Shortly before Christmas 2013, Michael Jensen, wrote for the ABC's opinion website *The Drum*. In a piece entitled, 'The sticky residues of Christian faith', he sarcastically attacked what he perceived to be the inconsistency of Australia's post-Christendom culture. In his second to final paragraph, he argued:

*The unbelief of Australians is better described as non-belief. It has nothing to do with informed opinion. It is just couch-potato stuff, unthinkingly inherited from our parents. It has nothing to do with careful consideration of the claims of the faith we reject, let's face it. I am sure we can find other more meaningful excuses for a summer break. How about "When You're Dead You're Dead Day"? Or "Phillip Adams Day"? (Jensen, 2013).*

While differing in tone (and writing from separate ends of the 2001-2013 time frame) both of the above authors displayed a clear frustration regarding Christianity's

changing role in Australian culture. In an interview, the director of the St. James Ethics Centre Simon Longstaff claimed that this had been evident in his dealings with members of the diocese (S. Longstaff, personal communication, 22 November 2012). According to Longstaff, the loss of institutional prestige had led to those within Sydney Diocese feeling a sense of persecution:

*I know that there are people in the diocese who would like to have a higher public profile, and to have [...] their Christian perspective more strongly influence [...] debate and that [they] feel a little bit persecuted in some ways, but their views are not as well respected as they might have been in the past. My own view is that I think that that's probably the sense of an institution losing power, and almost in a sense of mourning its loss of position, which I think is kind of curious given that the church is [...] not really meant to be a locus of power* (S. Longstaff, personal communication, 22 November 2012).

As noted in this chapter's epigraph, Kirby shared a similar sentiment in another interview conducted for this thesis. In the context of accounting for what he considered to be a negative portrayal of Sydney Diocese in Australia's secular media (See Chapter Five), the former High Court justice argued that Sydney Anglicanism was harkening back to its "comfortable" days as the largest church "when the Anglican Church was the biggest and the best." "It sort of lost its way", Kirby said. "It has lost its numbers. Then it started to do and say things that were out of joint with the times" (M. Kirby, personal communication, 29 January 2013). Indeed, rather than Hall's suggested shift to a more implicit model of evangelism, Sydney Diocese responded to these losses by attempting to regain its past successes, blitzing Sydney with evangelism campaigns that centre on their particular conservative evangelical understanding of the gospel, influenced though it may be by the lingering legacy of Christendom.

## **Sydney Diocese's forays into the Australian Public Sphere**

In order to approach Sydney Diocese's above-noted evangelistic campaigns, it is necessary to first outline the concept of the public sphere, as well as to briefly explore some of the implications that this concept carries. German sociologist and philosopher Jürgen Habermas defined the public sphere as “a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed”, and a space “in which private individuals assemble to form a public body” (1989: 136). In Habermas' concept, this space is distinct from the government as a, “site for the production and circulation of discourses that can in principle be critical of the state” (Fraser, 1990: 57). The public sphere is also distinct to the economy, “it is not an arena of market relations, but rather one of discursive relations” (Fraser, 1990: 57). Habermas' public sphere is not confined to a singular, physical space. In democracies with large populations where the physical presence of the participants is limited, there are a number of channels through which the public sphere operates. In ‘The public sphere: an encyclopaedia article’, Habermas wrote that “today newspapers and magazines, radio and television are the media of the public sphere” (1989: 136).

A number of theorists have further built upon Habermas' concept of the public sphere. Drawing on revisionist historiography to critique Habermas' concept of the ideal public sphere, Nancy Fraser (1990) argued that the public sphere was never an ideal, open space for all participants. Rather, she suggested that “from the start”, various publics engaged in conflict, “[Virtually] contemporaneous with the bourgeois public sphere there arose a host of competing counterpublics, including nationalist publics, popular peasant publics, elite women's publics, and working class publics” (Fraser, 1990: 61). Contemporary anxieties remain regarding who may participate in the public sphere, alongside concerns that it is too commercialised fragmented, or trivialised. Some theorists, however, such as Catharine Lumby (1999: xiii, cited in McKee, 2005: 1) and Alan McKee (2005: 4) have expressed optimism that the 21st Century has seen a diversifying of participant voices. Indeed, it can be argued that secular, post-Christendom Australia now features greater democratic participation by women and sexual minorities than would have been considered plausible during Samuel Marsden's colonial ministry. The continuing emergence of such voices has no



doubt brought with it additional, and in some cases, vocal opposition towards the Sydney Diocese of the Anglican Church, an institution that has variously opposed feminism, gay rights campaigns, and various forms of secularism. With this broader context in mind, this chapter seeks to analyse Sydney Diocese's contributions to Australia's contemporary public sphere, both through evangelistic efforts and the church's prolonged engagement with contentious political debates.

Perhaps the best known of Sydney Diocese's evangelistic efforts is a tract and the development of a course called *Two Ways To Live* (2003). Co-authored by Phillip Jensen and Tony Payne, and published by Matthias Media, this presentation of the Gospel message has been used in churches, university campus ministries, and public school scripture classes. In an example of its ubiquity and potential for adaptation, and its desire to reach younger constituents, it has more recently been used as the basis for an iPad app. In keeping with the tract format used by street evangelists, *Two Ways To Live* presented its message in a series of rational propositions, while assuming that the reader is not familiar with or knowledgeable about the subject matter (Powell, 2005: 7). In this case, *Two Ways To Live* presented a description of the Atonement in five short points, with accompanying illustrations. Below the text is analysed in terms of how it reflected broader Sydney Anglican discourse, including its alleged circumvention of the social and political elements of Christ's ministry. The text was set out as follows:

*God is the loving ruler of the world. He made the world. He made us rulers of the world under him.*

*We all reject the ruler—God—by trying to run life our own way without him. But we fail to rule ourselves or society or the world.*

*God won't let us rebel forever. God's punishment for rebellion is death and judgement.*

*Because of his love, God sent his Son into the world: the man Jesus Christ. Jesus always lived under God's rule. Yet by dying in our place he took our punishment and brought forgiveness.*

*God raised Jesus to life again as the ruler of the world. Jesus has conquered death, now gives new life, and will return to judge* (Jensen and Payne, 2003, cited in Powell, 2005: 7–8).

The above gospel presentation found in *Two Ways To Live* centres on the Penal Substitutionary model of the atonement (also known as the satisfaction motif), which is perhaps best summarised in point four, “Yet by dying in our place, he took our punishment and brought forgiveness” (Jensen and Payne 2003, cited in Powell, 2005: 7-8). Popular in Protestant churches, this particular understanding of the Atonement was developed by St Anselm of Canterbury in the 11<sup>th</sup> Century work, *Cur Deus Homo*. In order to present this version of the atonement to as wide an audience as possible, *Two Ways To Live* deployed simple, digestible phraseology. Eighty-six of the 127 words that comprise the tract’s main five-point text were monosyllabic.

Powell has provided an extensive critique of the tract. Entitled ‘New Ways To Live?’, this paper was presented to the 2005 Australian Missiology Conference. Powell contended that *Two Ways To Live* presented a domesticated, incomplete version of the Gospel, one concerned exclusively with the atoning death of Jesus, and missing key ethical components from the Synoptic Gospels. He conceded that *Two Ways To Live* was a short summary, and therefore some of its perceived flaws could be explained as pertaining to its brevity. Nonetheless, Powell argued:

*The Jesus presented here is one who ‘comes and dies and rises’ and apparently does little of significance between coming and dying [...] The depoliticising effects of Enlightened Christendom are obvious. The political Jesus Messiah of the Synoptic gospels, Jesus the radical, peasant, refugee, troublemaker, Jesus executed by the Imperial forces that now enforce the faith, Jesus that was God incarnate come to proclaim and teach the gospel of God — all these possible facets of Jesus are written out of the gospel story. Only Jesus the baby of Christmas and Jesus the sacrifice and triumphant victor of Easter remain. Jesus the subversive is silenced* (2005: 8).

Powell did not imply that this church's ministry was lacking in any ethical dimension, or that it was entirely apolitical, but rather that these issues were seen as being secondary in importance to the task of evangelism. Whether this is true or not, Sydney Diocese has commented on and campaigned over a number of ethical issues from their particular conservative evangelical perspective—for example, their campaigns on gender issues explored in Chapter Three. The next section of this chapter is devoted to closely analysing some of the diocese's political contributions drawing on the tools of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

### **Sydney Anglican political rhetoric**

As Chapter Three shows, the diocese's Ethics and Social Issues committee was key in shaping the current Sydney Anglican approach to sexuality, with a committee report calling for the continued criminalisation of homosexual sex. The modern-day version of the board is the diocese's Social Issues Executive, self-described on its website as “a ‘think tank’ in the Anglican Diocese of Sydney” that works to “consider what Christian theology might have to say about social issues and matters of public policy” (2013).

The trial of secular ethics classes in New South Wales government schools is one issue of particular concern to the Executive, with two separate briefings devoted exclusively to the subject on their website. The classes involved taking non-scripture students through a variety of hypothetical situations, where moral decision-making was required. When trialed in 2011, the classes became the subject of heated debate with opponents claiming that they represented the advance of secularism into New South Wales' education system. Introducing a bill into the New South Wales Legislative Council to abolish the classes in August 2011, Christian Democrat MLC Fred Nile likened the ethics curriculum to Nazism and Communism. The former Uniting Church minister argued that at their core, the classes taught:

*relative ethics, which is the basis of secular humanism, and I believe [...] this is the philosophy we saw in World War II with the Nazis and the Communists [...] Situation ethics means nothing is right and*

*nothing is wrong [...] therefore you can kill human beings without any embarrassment and any reservations (AAP, 2011).*

In stark contrast to Nile's reactionary response, the Executive articulated Sydney Diocese's opposition in prosaic and measured, if overly simplistic terms. The second issue briefing that appeared on the Executive's website took readers through the arguments 'for' and 'against' the classes' introduction. In their concluding paragraph, the briefing authors wrote that, "Teaching children about religion remains an important facet of the broad education we value for children in NSW. Christians who disagree with SEE can, perhaps, extend [...] latitude to it" (Belzer and Cameron, 2012). Despite this expression of lenience towards those with whom they disagreed, the authors also displayed the 'us and them' language that is at the heart of Sydney Anglican discourse's trope of separatism. In their conclusion the authors wrote: "[...] as the discussion continues, we must continue to speak out of concern for the good of others, remembering that *we have the words of eternal life to share*" (Belzer and Cameron, 2012, emphasis added). Christendom's sense of triumphalism was arguably apparent amongst the Social Issues Executive's statements regarding secular ethics classes, even where they otherwise showed deference to those with whom they disagreed.

Not all issues appeared to warrant the more measured, respectful approach that the Executive articulated on the diocese's behalf regarding ethics classes. The topic of abortion, known widely as a political "hot button issue" (Wallis, 2006: xxiv), is one unique in its ability to garner an emotional response. As Maddox observed, with some exceptions such as the efforts of the Liberal Party's conservative Lyons Forum and a brief period of anti-abortion advocacy by then-Health Minister Tony Abbott, the subject has in the main been treated with silence from Australia's two major political parties (2005: 103). In recent decades, the Anglican Church has similarly treated abortion with an arms-length approach. The Lambeth Conference of Bishops has not passed any resolutions regarding abortion since the 1960s, with the Australian General Synod last passing a motion decrying the number of terminations in Australia in 1989 (Porter, 2006: 83). Within Sydney Diocese, however, abortion has variously been the subject of furious commentary, including some noteworthy contributions from senior church figures. The usually irenic Glenn Davies told an abortion forum in

2005 that feminists in the 1960s and 1970s viewed abortion “almost as a cleansing ritual for them” (The Age, 2005, cited in Porter, 2006: 83–84). As Porter (perhaps redundantly) observed, Davies’ comment served to provide a “caricature” of feminism in its oversimplification of the way many women approach the topic. The level of emotive response evident in Davies’ comment was occasionally present in statements made by (the usually more measured) former Archbishop Peter Jensen. In his final address to the diocese’s Synod in 2012, Jensen deviated from his prepared text, declaring: “What sort of society is it that kills 100,000 children in the womb every year?” (Maley, 2012). The Archbishop tapped into a far broader discursive repertoire when he made this comment. Accurate statistics regarding the actual number of terminations carried out in a given year are difficult to produce. As such, one common feature of anti-abortion rhetoric is the dramatic appeal to high-end figures. One example of this occurred in a speech delivered by Abbott during his above-mentioned anti-abortion advocacy. The speech, which was delivered to a Catholic students’ group at the University of Adelaide, was phrased in such a manner that it is instantly recognisable to anyone familiar with Jensen’s final Synod address:

*Oddly enough, no local Christian has ever asked me how, as a Catholic, I can preside over a Medicare system which funds 75, 000 abortions a year. I fear there is no satisfactory answer to this question [...] as a measure of the moral health of our society, 100,000 terminated babies is a statistic which offers no comfort at all (Abbott, 2004, cited in Maddox, 2005: 104).*

That Jensen so closely paraphrased Abbott appears to indicate that the former Health Minister’s speech was the source that informed the former Archbishop’s outburst. Such a lifting of content from a prominent source makes sense, especially in light of the similarities in audience. Both the former Archbishop and the erstwhile Health Minister delivered speeches to conservative religious groupings from whom they expected a sympathetic hearing. The similarities between the two paragraphs went beyond the thematic and discursive, as there were a number of clear linguistic parallels. Both addresses were dramatic in their chosen terminology, such as references to aborted fetuses using familial nouns (Jensen’s as “children”, Abbott’s as “babies”) in order to gain sympathy for the unborn. Both made use of a rhetorical

question to maximum effect, and made appeals to the integrity of broader society. That Jensen includes Abbott's figure of 100,000 demonstrates the extent to which the former Archbishop—perhaps considering the Sydney Anglican audience present for his address—was willing to borrow the fiery rhetoric of another conservative religious and political source. It is also worth noting the former Archbishop's willingness to enter into hyperbole, and inaccuracy, in the process.

A similar willingness to engage in what might be deemed a duplicitous manner regarding the topic of abortion was evident in the diocese's somewhat disingenuous involvement in a January 2005 abortion forum held in Canberra. The gathering, which also included Buddhist, Hindu, Islamic, Catholic and Protestant representatives, called on government at all levels to restrict late term abortions and provide women with unwanted pregnancies with "objective" information regarding abortion (Porter, 2006: 82). Speakers at the forum, including Family First Senator Stephen Fielding, addressed an invite-only audience. While the forum appeared to have the authority and legitimacy of an interfaith event, the controlled attendance and absence of dissenting opinions suggested otherwise. The event spokesperson was Tracy Gordon, also the spokesperson and full time researcher for Sydney Diocese's Social Issues Executive, which suggested "high level support for the gathering from the Sydney Diosecean hierarchy" (Porter, 2006: 82). Gordon's involvement might also suggest that the Social Issues Executive, prepared to engage in even-handed debate in issue statements, sometimes used less transparent communication strategies. In this case, this included making misleading claims about the representative nature of an interfaith forum on abortion.

As the above example of the abortion forum demonstrates, the involvement of Sydney Anglicans in para-church activity outside their church's official auspices has been an interesting channel for the promulgation of their particular discourse. Another example is the involvement of Sydney Anglicans in the controversial Australian Christian Lobby (ACL). A special interest group that seeks to advocate for a variety of largely conservative policies, the ACL features Sydney Anglicans on its board and amongst its supporters. The organisation's public commentary often audaciously invokes a high moral authority while arguing for conservative standpoints on divisive

issues such as abortion and gay marriage.<sup>19</sup> One of the more extreme examples of these occurred when the ACL's then-Managing Director Jim Wallace sent out an ANZAC Day message on his Twitter account, "Just hope that as we remember Servicemen [sic] and women today we remember the Australia they fought for—wasn't gay marriage and Islamic!" (Wallace, cited in Benson, 2011). This tweet, and other declarations from Wallace, led to fiery public controversy. While obviously not an official project of Sydney Diocese, the ACL and Sydney Diocese often share common policy interests. The reasons for this are actual and direct: while the ACL's website observed that the group is "neither denominationally nor politically aligned" (2012), two of its six board members at the time of writing, Mark Allaby and Tony McLellan were themselves Sydney Anglicans, while a third, Terry Winters, attended an Anglican church in Melbourne (ACL website, 2012). In his 10 September 2012 appearance on *Q&A*, Peter Jensen demonstrated the extent of the discursive overlap between Sydney Diocese and the ACL. The then-Archbishop was asked if he condemned the ACL's Jim Wallace's claim that homosexuality was worse for the health than cigarette smoking. Wallace's comments had been the catalyst for then-Prime Minister Julia Gillard to pull out of a previously scheduled appearance at an ACL event, describing this statement as "offensive". While he had lost the support of the Prime Minister, Wallace found a loyal supporter in the Archbishop. Jensen said, "I am generally supportive of [the] ACL, I have to say. I don't support everything that's said by its leaders" (Jones, 2012). That Jensen slightly distanced himself from "everything that's said by its leaders" demonstrates the extent to which the ACL's gaffes and incendiary language are regarded as toxic within the broader Australian public sphere. That he did not distance himself with stronger language demonstrates his broader support for the ACL's cause, if not its expression. As this example demonstrates, Archbishop Peter Jensen once again revealed himself to be an artful communicator, carefully choosing his words so as to neither condemn the ACL, nor express support for statements that were so obviously offensive. Jensen's skilfully crafted political statements are analysed in further detail in the section below.

## **Archbishop Peter Jensen's political statements**

In spite of the marked decline in Jensen's church's attendance and influence in Australian society, the former Archbishop had a very high public profile during his episcopate. This period featured contributions already discussed in this thesis, namely the Mission, which sought to gain ten per cent of Sydney's population for 'Bible based' churches, and second, Jensen's political commentary on issues ranging from industrial relations to same-sex marriage. With his unveiling of the former at a rally in Homebush in 2001, Jensen very publicly declared that his would be an episcopate with evangelism at its centre (McGillion, 2005). However, not everyone shared the Archbishop's enthusiasm for the new venture. As has been already observed, the Mission had its critics within Sydney Diocese: in particular those concerned that the program's demands would place strain upon church life and resources. One critic was the Reverend Phillip Bradford, a minister and convener of Anglicans Together who claims that the mission had raised expectations of increasing numbers to such an extent as to cause "discouragement and even depression among some clergy" (Bradford, 2010, cited in Porter, 2011: 141). Bradford admitted that he had no statistical evidence to corroborate this conclusion. He nonetheless went on to say that following conversations with other clergy, he was led to believe it. While acknowledging its importance to Christianity, Bradford questioned how the diocese's Mission emphasised evangelism as a priority, over and against other biblical imperatives:

*I believe we have become so focused on evangelism that we have neglected the spiritual growth of our congregations and in particular their pastoral needs. We have been so busy planning the next big evangelistic outreach that we have neglected the sick, the lonely and the marginalised in our congregations (Bradford, 2010, cited in Porter, 2011: 141).*

Bradford also expressed concern that the Mission's plan to garner more church members invoked a sense of triumphalism. He wrote, "we have forgotten that God calls us to be faithful, but not necessarily successful" (Bradford, 2010, cited in Porter,



2011: 141). This was a repudiation of a concern for numerical, statistical, or financial success that post-Christendom churches have entertained on occasion, reflecting the historical and theological legacy outlined at the outset of this chapter.

Underpinning the ambitious Mission was an equally ambitious but risky financial plan. In order to finance new congregations and evangelistic efforts the diocese's Glebe Administration Board borrowed some \$150 million. As the *Australian Financial Review* put it, the Board "switched from a conservative debt-free investing policy to an aggressive strategy of leveraging holdings in local and international equities and property securities investments to try to reap bumper returns" (Australian Financial Review, 2009, cited in Porter, 2011: 143). From 2002 until 2007, the then-head of the Glebe Administration Board, Rodney Dredge, oversaw this risky practice of borrowing and investing (Marr, 2009: 8). Despite his lack of any formal experience in finance, business, or investment, the plan was successful for a number of years, bringing some \$10 million in dividends. With the Diocesan Endowment at \$550 million at the time of the September 2007 Synod meeting, a motion was passed thanking the retiring Dredge in emphatic terms, "In all he has done, Rodney has sought to honour God and the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in and beyond this diocese" (Marr, 2009: 8). This jubilant language did not last. The Global Financial Crisis stripped church finances and the diocese's speculative practices were thrust into the spotlight. A report prepared by consultants from Cameron Ralph suggested that one of the Glebe Administration Board's weaknesses was "a culture of 'forgiveness' instead of hard accountability" (Marr, 2009:10). Just two years after lauding Dredge's performance, in his address to a devastated October 2009 Synod meeting, Archbishop Jensen referred to the church's losses in what Marr sardonically described as "a *tour de force* of clerical obfuscation" (2009: 10). While Jensen admitted to encountering self-doubt, including struggles over the moral validity of gearing, the text of his Synod address lacked any mention of the words 'greed' or 'avarice' (Marr, 2009: 10). The language of the then-Archbishop—hitherto known as bold and uncompromising on matters of biblical truth—delved into the unusual territory of doubt and ambiguity:

*It may be that the Lord is chastising us for our sins [...] but then it may not be our sins at all—it may be that the Lord is simply seeking to test us or perhaps He is seeking to stop us doing something which*

*is right in itself but not in accordance with His secret will* (Marr, 2009: 10).

The strategic ambiguity of such statements was not entirely lost on the Synod's members, some of whom called for certain individuals to take responsibility for the losses. Susan Hooke, a member of a North Shore congregation, argued, "the losses were caused by people in this room" (Marr, 2009: 10). Such impassioned counter-rhetoric by a courageous minority ultimately proved unsuccessful in altering the diocese's discourse and direction, and a motion was passed proclaiming Synod's "thankfulness to, and dependence on, our Almighty God and Loving Heavenly Father" (Marr, 2009: 10). While no individuals were held to account for the church's worsened financial position, there were consequences. With greatly downgraded net assets of \$117 million heading into 2010, the diocese was forced to cut some \$5 million per year from its distribution of investments (Marr, 2009: 10). With attendant cuts in the diocese's mission program—including its evangelistic and charitable programs—the Sydney Anglicans' involvement in Australia's public sphere has undoubtedly suffered. Ironically, this happened due to the Mission, and the costs of its efforts to advance the diocese's public profile.

The trope of stressing a biblical basis for a speaker's conclusions—already established as key to Sydney Anglican discourse—was repeatedly evident in Archbishop Jensen's statements concerning public issues. On 27 June 2013, Jensen delivered an address at St. Barnabas, Broadway on the topic of 'How should Christians speak on public issues?' In this speech, the former Archbishop spoke of a Christian political narrative in a contest with secularism. In keeping with his emphasis on the primacy of scripture, Jensen said:

*The Bible delivers a particular way of thinking about human beings. An anthropology, a doctrine. The Bible is a universal book, aimed at all people. We preach to all, not some. That's our business* (Payne, 2013).

Making use of the triadic structure, Jensen's St. Barnabas address followed Knox's concept of propositional revelation when it asserted that the Bible offers up "a

doctrine”. This particular reference to Scripture as being doctrinal appealed to the Sydney Anglican audience that the speech was crafted for. Furthermore, the use of ‘us and them’ language, so often evident in the former Archbishop’s addresses to church audiences, and alongside second person pronouns “we” and “our”, furthered the sense of a shared identity and common mission, and highlighted an opposition that needs to be defeated. This proved to have a particularly potent rallying power. The former Archbishop accompanied this audience appeal with quasi-political language suggesting that the diocese had “a mandate to preach and teach the Bible. Never mind about the people wanting to shut us up. We do this out of love of neighbour, and love of God.” Describing this as a mandate—a biblical and God-given calling—served to justify, and even legitimise, the diocese’s program, even when it caused offence—or where it occasionally furthered division amongst Australia’s various faith traditions.

Another point of interest was that Jensen’s text asserted that too many Christians made statements regarding public issues “without ever mentioning the name of God” a practice which, according to the former Archbishop, gave “the devil” cause to cheer (Payne, 2013). This understanding of how political beliefs should be articulated clashed with the more muted and nuanced approaches favoured by several prominent Christians in public life. For example, in his second book *The Audacity of Hope* (2006), then-United States Senator Barack Obama argued that Christians should couch their political statements in non-religious terms. The future President said that this included demonstrating how policies would work if implemented:

*What our deliberative, pluralist democracy does demand is that the religiously motivated translate their concerns into universal, rather than religion-specific, values. It requires that their proposals must be subject to argument and amenable to reason. If I am opposed to abortion for religious reasons and seek to pass a law banning the practice, I cannot simply point to the teachings of my church or invoke God’s will and expect that argument to carry the day. If I want others to listen to me, then I will have to explain why abortion violates some principle that is accessible to people of all faiths, including those with no faith at all (Obama, 2006: 219).*

Anticipating how his suggested model for public engagement might be received by some Christians, Obama went on to describe this as being necessary because of the nature of secular democracies:

*For those that believe in the inerrancy of the Bible, as many evangelicals do, such rules of engagement might seem just one more example of the tyranny of the secular and material worlds, over the sacred and eternal. But in a pluralistic democracy, we have no choice. Almost by definition, faith and reason operate in different domains and involve different paths to discerning truth (2006: 219).*

Despite his adoption of the term ‘mandate’, Jensen’s characteristically proscribed approach to public debates clashed with the U.S President’s rules of engagement for the post-Christendom public sphere. Jensen’s call for Christians to freely invoke God’s name so as to “deny the devil comfort”, demonstrated the extent to which evangelism occupies a central place in Sydney Anglican discourse and was key to his episcopate, even in matters of secular debate. As was signposted at the beginning of this chapter, even while making his theologically laden political statements, Archbishop Jensen followed his diocese’s longstanding tradition of not aligning with any political party (Hilliard, 1997: 102). As Chapter Two’s exploration of Jensen’s rise considered, the former Archbishop’s first public comments in his new post included a riposte to then-Prime Minister John Howard over indigenous rights. The new prelate’s comments came as a surprise at the time (as they would many times more throughout the next decade) because he was not one of the ‘usual suspects’ who routinely criticised the Howard Liberal Government (West, 2005). This illuminated a recurring theme in Jensen’s public statements, namely his repeated expression of independence from any political party or affiliation. According to a report by the *Sydney Morning Herald*’s Deborah Snow, the former Archbishop “hopes no one would know how he votes”, and potentially revealed he once voted for a communist, the green bans champion Jack Mundey (2013). Snow’s wording in this article closely echoed another statement made by the former Archbishop in 2005. When meeting with then-secretary of the Australian Workers’ Union (AWU) Bill Shorten, Jensen was told that the union movement could not discern his political leanings “That’s right” Jensen said. “I am in no one’s pocket” (West, 2005). As this might suggest,

Jensen stressed that his public utterances represent a complex combination of conservative and social democratic political ideals, and this freed him up to enter and withdraw from public debate as he saw fit.<sup>20</sup>

This political independence was evident when Jensen expressed admiration for Prime Minister Howard's social conservatism. This declaration came in spite of his earlier umbrage at Howard's economic and industrial relations policies. As Chapter Six explores, Jensen's vehement opposition to postmodernism was on full display during his inaugural presidential address to Synod in 2001. At one point in this speech, his sustained attack on relativistic methods of interpretation turned to the subject of Australian public schools' pedagogy. Jensen argued that "The children of Christian families may well be better equipped and better guarded against the world, but they can never be made invulnerable to it. They, too, are being taught new, subjective ways of reading texts" (2001). In his presidential address to the 2006 Synod, Jensen launched another attack on secularism that included a swipe at social libertarianism. Here, his qualified support for Howard was again evident:

*It is right and proper to disagree with the policy and operation of Government: I have expressed disagreement most recently over the continued detention of David Hicks, for example. But there is something revealing about the malice and hatred, the sheer lack of civility—dare I say the failure to love our neighbour?—in so many of those who write to newspapers about the Prime Minister. I think it reveals a fear that Mr. Howard's social conservatism may actually have proved to be broadly correct and that it is the libertarian position which has done untold harm, during the forty years that it has been the ruling philosophy (Jensen, 2006).*

The fragment of Jensen's speech copied above begins with the language of rationality, as signaled by the propositional statement "it is right and proper to disagree with the operation of Government". However, as is the case with his inaugural Synod address, the Archbishop went on to cast wide-ranging assertions, such as that social conservatism was maligned because it had "proven to be broadly correct", that "the

libertarian position...has done untold harm” and, drawing on a regal metaphor, that this position had been the “ruling philosophy” for four decades. Jensen’s criticism of libertarianism cut both ways and the former Archbishop’s rhetoric also incorporated attacks on *laissez-faire* economic policy. His viewpoints regarding human sin led him to disagree with Prime Minister Howard regarding the value of unionism. A much-overlooked early line that typifies much of this political expression was that Howard’s was a standpoint that was “not communal enough” (West, 2005).

*I very much identify with Brett’s characterisation of liberalism [...] Brett discusses liberalism of the early-20th century, with its emphasis on freedom with responsibility, on a person standing up in his or her own right in order to serve others. Now that’s Christian. You get to the end of the 20th century and the rhetoric is still the same—freedom is still the great value for the Liberals—but the sense of responsibility is no longer there. I don’t say for Mr. Howard, necessarily, but in the community this strong emphasis on freedom is now allied with this invidious philosophy of individualism (West, 2005).*

One prominent and effective feature of Jensen’s rhetorical repertoire was his use of powerful and depersonalised terms to attack ideas with which he disagreed. This technique was evident in the above statements regarding liberalism’s alleged lack of regard for others. Jensen also argued that this change in political philosophy was the result of human sinfulness.

*In the original sense of freedom you take responsibility, which is to say, you love others. Your freedom is limited by the commitment you have for other people. By the time you get to the end of the 20th century, there’s no sense of love for others. It’s purely what suits me. I think the Liberal Party originally began with a Christian view of human freedom and has lost it, so that what was human freedom has now become multiplicity of choice (West, 2005).*

Jensen's low anthropology led him to the conclusion that—if left to their own devices—individuals invariably seek selfish ends over the good of others. In several public speeches and interviews, the former Archbishop articulated that this excess of individualism informed his support for the role played by unions. As he told the *Sydney Morning Herald's* Deborah Snow:

*It's my problem with free-market capitalism, that if you simply allow anyone to behave as they will, we will exploit each other. Therefore the free capacity to bond together and present demands to management I think is absolutely fundamental to our good health as a society* (Snow, 2013).

This concern for “our good health as a society”, a metaphor also used in Jensen's inaugural Synod address (cf. Excerpt XXIV), led the former Archbishop to form a number of key alliances that may have otherwise appeared unlikely. For example, former Finance Minister and Labor Party heavyweight Lindsay Tanner found he broadly agreed with Jensen on a number of topics. The Archbishop read his book, *Crowded Lives* (2003), about the impact of work and loneliness on people (West, 2005). Jensen also found a surprising ally in Clive Hamilton, whose work—such as the book *Affluenza* (2006)—explores the impact of greed and free-market economics on the wellbeing of Australians. Hamilton's work was referred to in Jensen's speeches and writings (West, 2005). Furthermore, Jensen's concern for the health of the trades unions saw him inevitably join Shorten in criticising the Howard Liberal Government for its WorkChoices industrial relations policy. This was particularly evident during a series of public addresses that Jensen delivered for ABC Radio National as part of the Boyer Lectures series. Since airing in 1959 the Boyer Lectures have been an ABC tradition. With an elite group of Australian leaders invited to participate, the lectures spark debate amongst listeners on a broad range of topics. With other past speakers including Rupert Murdoch and General Peter Cosgrove, Jensen's choice to speak for the 2005 series demonstrated his media cachet and therefore his influence. This influence came despite the decline in church attendance already mentioned in this chapter. Examining whether or not Christ “has a place in our world” (something that is questioned in the series' subtitle), Jensen bluntly attacked Howard minister Malcolm Turnbull's defence of the market mechanisms underpinning WorkChoices:

“I think Jesus would dispute all (Turnbull’s) positions” (Jensen, cited in Williams, 2005). Having involved himself so directly in a party political debate, Jensen faced criticism from within. Letters penned by small business owners were published in the *Southern Cross* newspaper, disagreeing with the Archbishop’s WorkChoices commentary (West, 2005). One of Jensen’s own assistant Bishops, South Sydney’s Robert Forsyth, openly disagreed. Identifying himself as the “driest of the Bishops” when it came to economics, he declared his support for the industrial relations reforms (West, 2005). As these examples demonstrate, while Sydney Anglican discourse invests heavily in the role and office of the Archbishop, the church’s support for its prelate is not absolute. Much of this was due to the Protestant nature of the majority of Sydney Diocese: lacking the *ex cathedra* or infallible status of certain Papal pronouncements on moral issues, Jensen could not automatically expect the support of his entire diocese, especially when commenting on controversial public policies (West, 2005).

While the Your Rights At Work campaign was ultimately successful, resulting in the Howard Liberal Government’s defeat, this example demonstrates the potential for an Archbishop entering a political debate to encounter opposition—even from within his own clergy. Indeed, in broader terms, Jensen’s forays into Australia’s public sphere were controversial, praised for their bold insertion of religious language into the secular lexicon, but criticised for their potential to widen divisions within Australian society. During a pre-retirement interview published in June 2013, Jensen told Snow that his main achievement was to “keep the talk about God alive and well in the public space [...] so that people are reminded that Jesus Christ is the king of the universe” (Snow, 2013). The former Archbishop, therefore, defined his as being a public ministry, the success of which was measured on his ability to articulate his church’s message in Australia’s broader public cultural debates using evangelistic language. Upon Jensen’s retirement, Forsyth described him as a “strong” leader of the Sydney Diocese’s “tribe” (Overington, 2012: 22). For Jensen’s detractors, the former Archbishop’s public profile has been the subject of derision. In an interview conducted for this thesis, a Sydney Anglican minister who did not wish to be named argued that Jensen’s conservative standpoints on divisive issues had damaged his church’s standing in the community:



*He's overseen the growth of public perception that what he stands for is the opposition to [...] homosexuality, and opposition to women. He is widely disliked in the community. He hasn't won the community; he's actually alienated the community [...] His [episcopate] will be seen as an effort to hold on to the past [...] In a world quickly changing, he's decided to [...] put all his efforts and hope into a hermeneutic that's unsustainable, into an effort to concentrate on evangelism [that] simply has not succeeded, to win a city that's more alienated than ever from Sydney Anglicanism (Anonymous, personal communication, December 2012).*

Jensen's public rhetoric—examined earlier in this chapter for its complexity and eschewing of traditional Left-Right political trajectories—may have itself served to alienate a broad portion of Australian society. As Snow wrote in the *Sydney Morning Herald* profile, “Progressives deplore Jensen's unbending stances against gay marriage, homosexuality, euthanasia and women priests. But then he'll come out with the kind of pro-union and vaguely anti-capitalist sentiment that sends shivers up the collective spine of the establishment” (2013). Indeed, raising the ire of both sides of the mainstream Australian political spectrum with his commentary was likely to have caused Jensen to be judged harshly by an even broader constituency of Australian citizens. And yet, as willing as he was to engage about contentious public debates, it is unlikely that such widespread condemnation bothered Jensen. As the *Sydney Morning Herald's* Damien Murphy wrote in the former Archbishop's controversial *Q&A* appearance, “Jensen did not emerge as a global leader of Anglicans disaffected with the church's seeming growing acceptance of the ministry of gays and women by not speaking out for his beliefs” (Murphy, 2013).

## **Conclusion**

Chapter Four has explored key moments in Sydney Diocese's contemporary engagement in the Australian public sphere, incorporating the church's evangelistic efforts and its involvement in political debate. This engagement has been placed in the broader social context of the post-Christendom rift between church and state, a divorce the diocese has struggled with. Furthermore, this chapter has exposed the

central place of a post-Christendom understanding of evangelism in Sydney Anglican discourse. The chapter has argued that Archbishop Jensen's attempts to commend his church to a wider audience met with consequences ranging from the dangerous to the disappointing, with large-scale evangelism campaigns leading to a steep decline in financial resources, and the Anglican Diocese of Sydney further alienating itself from a broader portion of the Australian population. Having explored these events, *Graving Another Testament* now turns to a media analysis, exploring how the gulf between Sydney Diocese and broader Australian society makes itself evident in reportage and commentary in secular media outlets. Chapter Five further reveals Jensen to have been a master communicator, one with unparalleled media access and profile.

## Chapter Five: Sydney Diocese's Media Relations

### **Introduction**

In liberal democracies where a large number of citizens express and publish their opinions, media outlets play a central role in conducting public debates. Habermas' dated statement that "newspapers and magazines, radio and television are the media of the public sphere" (Habermas, 1989: 136) is "better suited to mass media in the context of the post-war social reconstruction and Cold War politics of America and Europe than to the complex, multimedia environments that we now inhabit" (Lunt and Livingstone, 2013: 91). However, it is worth considering for its application to the contemporary public sphere. While Habermas could not have predicted the current media landscape, the concept that the public sphere has a symbiotic relationship with 'the media' has endured. In such a relationship, while the public sphere is considered bigger than the media that represents it, "It's only in the mass media that vast populations of people can come together to exchange ideas. You can't fit the entire population of America or Great Britain, or Australia into a town hall where they could all discuss issues that affect them" (McKee, 2005: 4). Following on from Chapter Four's examination of Sydney Diocese's participation in the Australian public sphere, this chapter considers how this involvement has been refracted and presented through the lens of Australia's secular media outlets.

In analysing how journalists and commentators framed the Sydney Diocese, and in outlining the efforts of Archbishop Peter Jensen to disseminate his church's message through these outlets, this chapter makes an important contribution to the broader analysis of the shape and spread of Sydney Anglican discourse. Chapter Five analyses the varying discursive frames and tropes at work in newspaper articles, television shows and opinion leaders' commentaries regarding Sydney Anglicanism, with a view to the various ways that they challenged or carried the diocese's message. The chapter segues into an analysis of the media management of former Archbishop Peter Jensen: a media-friendly prelate in possession of keen communication skills. It also discusses the role played by the Sydney Diocese's communications unit, Anglican

Media Sydney (AMS), with some analysis of the diocese's newspaper *The Southern Cross* and website SydneyAnglicans.net.<sup>21</sup> Finally, Chapter Five interrogates an irony: that despite the fact that Jensen faced scrutiny and criticism from certain sections of Australia's media landscape, these journalists and commentators served to further his already burgeoning profile to an extent not afforded to other religious leaders.

### **The relationship**

During his twelve years as Archbishop, Peter Jensen developed a burgeoning media profile. He appeared on a number of high rating television programs to articulate his diocese's standpoints on significant issues—including a memorable appearance on the 10 September 2012 edition of *Q&A*—and penned columns that were published in the major metropolitan daily *The Sydney Morning Herald*. He was the subject of a number of profile pieces written for *The Monthly* (West, 2005; Marr, 2009), *The Australian* (Overington, 2012), and *The Daily Telegraph* (Ackerman, 2003). Jensen also had the rare privilege of delivering the ABC's Boyer Lecture in 2006. This ubiquitous profile was the results of an astute media strategy from the diocese's dedicated communications unit as well as the former Archbishop's talents as an opinion leader. Describing the latter, Porter wrote:

*His personal appearance is unremarkable; his clothing style is conventional for a man of his age (he was born in 1943) and interests. Since his election in 2001, however, he has launched himself onto the Sydney scene—and indeed the international scene—in unprecedented fashion. He has revealed himself to be a shrewd, confident media player, contributing to all manner of public debates and conversations with great personal charm and a level of accessibility both admirable and rare in church leaders (Porter, 2006: 30).*

Jensen clearly recognised that in order for his ministry to successfully engage a broader public, he needed to be an accessible and media-friendly Archbishop. Reflecting on the *Q&A* appearance mentioned above, he told Overington that it was

“an opportunity to put a Christian point of view in public, and that's my business” (Overington, 2012). Given the sheer volume of Jensen’s media engagement, analysing every source that covered or commented on Jensen’s episcopate would be a cumbersome task. For the sake of brevity, this chapter does not engage in this exhaustive level of analysis. Nonetheless, exploring a sample of key pieces from widely viewed and highly read outlets serves to illustrate the nature of coverage and commentary. These sources include newspapers—*The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Daily Telegraph*, and *The Australian* and television programs such as the ABC’s *Q&A*. These sources have been selected because they are mainstream publications with expansive audiences. For example, according to the Audit Bureau of Circulations, in February 2014, *The Sydney Morning Herald* had an average circulation of 132,000 readers from Monday to Friday, with this number increasing to an average 228,000 on Saturdays (Audit Bureau of Circulations, 2014). This paled in comparison with the News Corporation tabloid *The Daily Telegraph*’s figures, averaging 293,512 readers from Monday to Friday during the same time period (Audit Bureau of Circulations, 2014). These high readerships mean that the pieces analysed in this chapter were viewed by diverse audiences. These readerships no doubt greatly differed in their respective relationships to Sydney Diocese.

Exploring the topic of the Australian secular media’s coverage of Peter Jensen’s episcopate raises questions about media efficacy. That is, given the significance of the subject at hand—one of the world’s most influential religious leaders, and unquestionably one of the most powerful figures in Anglicanism—were Australia’s secular media agencies able to provide adequate scrutiny and report in a manner that was as fair as it was rigorous? As found in the literature review, questions regarding the nature and quality of Australia’s religious affairs reporting have been well documented (Doogue, 2006; Hassan, 2006; Maddox, 2005).

Opinion has been mixed regarding whether Australian reporters and commentators have been unfairly harsh—or for that matter, all too positive—in their treatment of the Sydney Anglicans. In an interview conducted for this thesis, Jensen’s long time correspondence partner, Michael Kirby, placed among those who argued that the former Archbishop received unfairly harsh treatment from Australia’s secular media.

The former High Court Justice cited the 10 September 2012 episode of *Q&A* as an example:

*I don't think they've been very kind to Archbishop Jensen. I mean, I don't agree with some of his views. But I think they've made him into a kind of bogeyman. That's made me feel a little disquieted. I happen to agree with a comment made by Gerard Henderson in his version of Media Watch, in which he was rather critical of a Q&A Program on the ABC, in the way in which Archbishop Jensen's views were treated. They were rather disrespected. I can understand that on one level. My partner doesn't respect Archbishop Jensen's point of view. Maybe I do so out of the loyalty to the Church I grew up in, and love. But, I would never be impolite. It's not Anglican to be impolite [...] I feel uncomfortable when I see impoliteness (M. Kirby, personal communication, 29 January 2013).<sup>22</sup>*

Kirby added, however, that he understood that Sydney Diocese's conservative stances on a number of issues made them something of an easy media target, citing the new marriage vows where women promise to submit. He said: "It's little wonder, really, that the media then went for the jugular. That's how media operates. It spots a weakness and jumps on it" (M. Kirby, personal communication, 29 January 2013).

A number of informed observers argued, however, that journalists and commentators had depicted Archbishop Jensen and his diocese in a positive light. For example, Hassan argued that a lack of understanding of faith's inner workings on the part of journalists "means fundamentalist Muslim and hardline evangelical Christian leaders are not adequately prodded about their positions. Oddly, they are subject to less serious scrutiny than are other public figures" (2006: 13). While Hassan does not mention Jensen by name here, it is not difficult to imagine she has him in mind while writing given the former Archbishop's significant profile. Arguing along these same lines, Porter opined that certain religious affairs pieces devoted to Jensen were overtly positive in their presentation of the former Archbishop. "The media is fascinated with him", she said (M. Porter, personal communication, 5 January 2013).

While the above-noted assessments differ regarding whether or not Australia's secular media 'challenged' or 'carried' Archbishop Jensen's message, a broad scan of commentary from the time demonstrates that there is some truth to both interpretations, as sources varied their approach to the Jensen agenda.

Journalist and commentator David Marr is a notable example of those who clearly challenged Archbishop Jensen's message. During Jensen's episcopate, Marr wrote two pieces regarding the former Archbishop, 'The Archbishop says no' in the 7 June 2008 edition of the *Sydney Morning Herald's Good Weekend* supplement, and 'Anglican Business' in the December 2009 issue of the cultural magazine *The Monthly*. In keeping with Marr's *modus operandi*, the style of these pieces was reportage: combining reporting with commentary. That Marr intended to directly challenge Sydney Anglican discourse through his work is evident, with perhaps the clearest instance of this occurring at the end of *Anglican Business*. He wrote:

[...] *Despite the millions thrown at it in the boom years, Sydney proved deaf to the message. Church attendance is flatlining. Among the city's women and gays, it's a cause for discreet celebration* (Marr, 2009: 12).

Marr sardonically argued in this concluding paragraph that Sydney Diocese is an institution deaf to the interests of certain minorities, to such an extent that the church's misfortune will be the subject of happiness amongst these out-groups. Such a statement served to challenge the diocese's domination through ridicule, in this case through reference to "flatlining attendance" (Marr, 2009: 12). To recall *Graving Another Testament's* Introduction, Marr's propensity towards sardonic commentary exemplified above also led to him producing occasional errors in his portrayal of the diocese. As the literature review revealed, Marr particularly erred when he claimed that, "Sydney evangelicals see prosperity as a sign of God's favour" (2009: 10). As previously observed, this description does not really apply to Sydney Anglicans, who are far less likely to subscribe to prosperity theology than their Pentecostal counterparts. Such inaccuracies recall Hassan's criticisms of journalists lacking understanding of the workings of faith (2006: 13). Such an error was detrimental to

the overall credibility of Marr's articles and arguably his efforts to hold Jensen to account.

The journalist and commentator, Julia Baird, was another media voice critical of Jensen. Unlike Marr, however, she was something of a diocese insider. A former member of Sydney Diocese's Synod, Baird resigned when Jensen became Archbishop (Overington, 2012).<sup>23</sup> She has penned several opinion pieces regarding the diocese and its conservative approach to particular issues. A former member of the Movement for the Ordination of Women (MOW), Baird's pieces drew on many of the same discursive resources of those theologians outlined in Chapter Three. For example, in the *Sydney Morning Herald* column 'Going backwards into the future' (2012), Baird emphasised the place of sociological and historical context in interpreting biblical passages regarding women. In the piece, which appeared in the *Herald* on 1 December 2012, Baird applied this concept to the diocese's new marriage vows where wives promise to 'submit' to their husbands. Regarding this new vow, Baird argued:

*Men are also told to submit to their wives, but this is rarely pointed out. The Christian model of service should be service, not hierarchy. There is a far stronger case in the Bible for the full expression of women's gifts than the exclusion of them* (Baird, 2012b).

Here, Baird draws on scripture as a resource in order to challenge the patriarchal elements of Sydney Diocese. Such a challenge removed scriptural authority from being the sole domain of conservative evangelicals who argue the Bible is clear in its ordering of relationships between the sexes, a scriptural appeal that, as Chapter Three demonstrated, is a common trope in Sydney Anglican discourse concerning gender. That the column was by a widely read columnist in one of Sydney's major metropolitan daily broadsheets ensured that this challenge to Jensen's authority was experienced by a wider, secular reading audience. More than this, the piece demonstrated the potential for Australia's media commenters to scrutinise Jensen's message should they choose to take the challenge on themselves.

As adumbrated above, not all of Australia's journalists and opinion leaders were negative in their assessment of the former Archbishop's virtues, stances and legacy.



Indeed, the frayed relationship between many sections of the popular press and church led to journalists who were less informed about theological matters submitting the odd story that was overly positive about the former Archbishop and without the level of scrutiny his influential role demanded.

In the earlier-mentioned interview, Porter identified as fitting into the overly positive category in an October 2012 piece that appeared in *The Australian* about Jensen's departure (M. Porter, personal communication, 5 January 2013). Written by Caroline Overington, the profile piece (2012) featured quotes from a diverse group of Anglican Church figures—both admirers and detractors of Jensen—in order to give a balanced perspective on the then-Archbishop's legacy. Overall however, the piece legitimised the former Archbishop and his message more than it provided any challenge. For example, in the eleventh paragraph an overview of Jensen's education included all of the former Archbishop's qualifications, from his BA at University of Sydney to his Doctorate from Oxford, "titles which together mean that he was engaged in serious, theological scholarship for many years" (Overington, 2012). Overington drew upon Jensen's educational achievements, lending him social capital and intellectual credibility. The piece legitimised the former Archbishop's conclusions as resulting from "serious scholarship" (Overington, 2012) with all of the goodwill such a statement implied. Furthermore, there were a number of instances where Overington's phraseology directly carried Jensen's message. Perhaps the most glaring of these appeared in the article's closing editorial comment, where she wrote:

*Divorce is commonplace, and the Prime Minister is not only an atheist, she's unmarried and she lives with her partner. It ought to be tough in such an environment for a church man (sic) to find an audience, but Jensen got one on national TV. So, while he might have failed to stop women becoming priests, he has succeeded extremely well at what he always said was his most important work: bringing the word of God, as he interprets it, into the spotlight (Overington, 2012).*

Jensen was described using the simple phrase, "a church man" (sic), which was shorn of any adjectives that might seek to qualify that statement. The author could have

chosen a theological descriptor, such as ‘conservative evangelical’, which would place Jensen where he belonged on a broader spectrum of Christian thought. In not doing so, Overington seemed to make a statement normative to all churchmen with the implied assumption seeming to be that divorce is a social reality opposed by all Christians. This is to say nothing about the gender assumptions at work in the second half of the “church man” (sic) description. Finally, the superlative phrase “extremely well”, used in her evaluation of Jensen’s performance as Archbishop, served as an endorsement (albeit with the qualifier that this success was on Jensen’s own terms).

Taking their endorsement of Jensen considerably further than Overington’s piece, a number of Australia’s conservative media commentators have—seemingly instinctively—expressed heartfelt support for the leader of one of Australia’s longest enduring institutions. This loose grouping included—but was not limited to—the *Daily Telegraph*’s Piers Ackerman, *The Australian*’s editorial team, and the aforementioned Gerard Henderson. In such offerings, the conservative trope of honouring institutions that have “stood the test of time”, explored in Chapter Six’s CDA, is evident. In ‘Sydney’s Soldier of Christ Set to Smite’ (2003) the *Daily Telegraph*’s political commentator Piers Ackerman defended the Archbishop’s stance against homosexuals in church leadership roles. The particular impetus for this June 2003 piece was then-Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams’ proposed consecration of an openly homosexual man, Jeffrey John, as the Bishop of Reading. In the column Ackerman argued, “the church has condemned homosexual activity since its inception, as it has sexual activity outside of marriage” (2003). Perhaps the clearest possible example of the trope of a conservative appeal to tradition and longevity, such an appeal drew upon the legitimacy of long-held beliefs, and served to dismiss the claims of Jensen’s opponents. Ackerman portrayed the former Archbishop as the upholder of values held since the church’s “inception” (2003). The fact that Jesus Christ never mentions homosexuality in any of the four gospels and that churches have differed on their approach to the matter appeared to be irrelevant to what Ackerman considered the church’s ‘voice’. As such, Jensen was upheld in the Ackerman piece as the true defender of Christian values.<sup>24</sup>

A similar defence of Jensen’s views through appeal to longevity and tradition could occasionally be found in the *Daily Telegraph*’s fellow News Corporation newspaper,

*The Australian*. This broadsheet, which is Australia's only nationwide daily newspaper, has a broader agenda of defending conservative cultural institutions and obsessively scrutinising the public broadcaster, the ABC. For example, Greg Sheridan wrote an opinion piece praising the 12 April 2012 *Q&A* performance of Catholic Cardinal George Pell, who on that night debated atheist biologist and author Richard Dawkins. Entitled 'Pell's performance was a revelation' (2012), the piece contained the byline of the Foreign Editor, indicating that the opinions contained therein were representative of the newspaper's official stance. The column stressed the legitimacy and longevity of institutions in a later paragraph:

*Pell gave us a glimpse Monday night of what the tradition embodies: its wisdom, its urbanity, its range and depth [...] There was something faintly Edwardian about [Dawkins'] inability to grasp, or even concede the intellectual substance of, the tradition of metaphysics going back to the ancient Greeks (Sheridan, 2012).*

Sheridan lent metaphysics and religious tradition, represented here by high-ranking Church official Cardinal Pell a particular credibility due to its sheer longevity. An editorial published on 12 September 2012 further added to *The Australian's* genuflecting demonstration of respect for conservative religious institutions over and against those radical and disrespectful enough to call them into question. Entitled 'Questions and Mockery' (2012) the editorial criticised the way that Archbishop Jensen was treated throughout his *Q&A* appearance earlier that week. Appearing with the newspaper's official masthead as its byline, the piece spoke on behalf of the broadsheet's entire editorial team. The editorial argued that by placing Jensen alongside the outspoken left-wing comedienne Catherine Deveny—who mocked and interrupted the then-Archbishop during the broadcast—the ABC deliberately subjected his views to ridicule. The trope of respect for enduring values and institutions—central to conservative discourses—was perhaps most evident in the final paragraph, where the author opined:

*As a religious and community leader, the Archbishop is a custodian of a creed more than 2000 years old that provided the foundations of our society. While he shouldn't be isolated from sensible debate*

*about tolerance, diversity and reform, nor should he be shouted down without respect (The Australian, 2012).*

This defence of Jensen's traditional role served to treat the former Archbishop of Sydney as the rightful recipient of "respect", and granted his office and views the legitimacy of tradition (indeed, a tradition said to be the "foundation of our society" (*The Australian*, 2012). Furthermore, Jensen is said to be a "custodian of a creed more than 2000 years old" (*The Australian*, 2012), a claim that could be extended to all other Australian Christian leaders, including some who at that time disagreed with Sydney Diocese's conservative approach to homosexuality. While the argument that "he shouldn't be isolated from sensible debate about tolerance, diversity and reform" (*The Australian*, 2012) reflected the secular nature of the newspaper, the call for "sensible" debate serves to imply that Deveny's contributions were not rational, thereby marginalising them as not befitting the public debate surrounding same-sex marriage. That the editorial reinforced Jensen's rhetoric is clear when considering that the word "respect", and the concept that the former Archbishop is the rightful recipient of it, were both introduced by Jensen himself during the *Q&A* appearance in question. This particular trope of the former Archbishop's discourse is explored further in a section below regarding his media management prowess.

A final point regarding the opinion piece is that *The Australian* did not confer the same "respect" upon Dean Drayton in the earlier-mentioned 2006 editorial that it called for regarding Archbishop Jensen's views. Instead, the outgoing Uniting Church president, custodian as he was of the same "creed more than 2000 years old" as Jensen, was "shouted down", as *The Australian's* editorial page lectured that "Church heads should steer clear of pollie bothering" and labeled Drayton with the epithet of "meddlesome priest" (*The Australian*, 2006). Respect appeared to not be universally deserved.

Regardless of which sections the Australian secular media were critical or supportive of Archbishop Jensen in their commentary his twelve years in the office saw him amass an enviable media profile. To briefly summarise, this included—but was not limited to—delivering the annual ABC Boyer Lectures in 2006, writing opinion columns for the *Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Monthly*, appearing on the high-

rated ABC panel discussion show *Q&A*, and appearing in news articles for major metropolitan dailies, as well as being interviewed for public and commercial television.

In order to appreciate the extent of the former Archbishop's reach, it is illuminating to compare his media presence with that of other Australian religious leaders. Perhaps the closest of these in terms of sheer media saturation is Jensen's occasional ally, the erstwhile Catholic Archbishop of Sydney, George Pell. In his own right, Pell amassed a significant profile during his 2001-2014 episcopate. This included a weekly column in *The Sunday Telegraph* (Marr, 2013: 4), as well as a hostile, but well-rating standoff against Richard Dawkins on the above-mentioned August 2012 episode of *Q&A*. The Catholic prelate was also in a number of television and radio interviews. Despite his high profile however, Pell's media performances were not always polished. For example, on 13 November 2012—one day after then-Prime Minister Julia Gillard announced the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse—Pell called a press conference at Polding House. Marr referred to the Cardinal's performance during the conference as beginning with “carefully crafted good work” that “fell apart” after he was subjected to questioning. In particular, Pell demonstrated himself to be “unrepentant” expressing umbrage towards the way the Catholic Church had been portrayed during the issue's media coverage. Lashing out at his immediate audience, Pell argued:

*There is a persistent press campaign against the Catholic Church's adequacies and inadequacies in this area that does not necessarily represent the percentage of the problem that we offer. In other words because there's a press campaign focused largely on us it does not mean that we are largely the principal culprit (Marr, 2013: 7).*

In keeping with the earlier-adumbrated theme of mutual suspicion, Pell was openly disdainful of the Fourth Estate, which he accused of carrying out an anti-Catholic agenda in its reporting on the sexual abuse of children. Despite the scope of his media presence, Pell's relationship with a large portion of Australia's secular media appeared

strained—especially compared to the ease with which Jensen appeared to handle his media engagements.

However rocky the relationship between prelate and press, Cardinal Pell commanded a similar media presence to that of Jensen. When it came to Protestant leaders, however, the Anglican Archbishop was without peer. This became obvious when comparing Jensen’s presence with that of the national representative of Australia’s third biggest Christian denomination, the Uniting Church in Australia (UCA). From 2001 to 2013, the UCA National Assembly had five presidents: James Haire, Dean Drayton, Gregor Henderson, Alistair Macrae, and Andrew Dutney. As can be expected, each of these men made a number of media appearances, including newspaper and radio interviews. Of all of these, it was Drayton who garnered the biggest share of reportage. In 2003, the Triennial Assembly voted in favour of Resolution 84, which allowed congregations to employ a same-sex oriented minister should they so choose. Drayton was required to represent his church and explain this decision in interviews. For this, and articulating the UCA’s stances on economics, asylum seekers, and reconciliation, Drayton was the subject of a ranting editorial in *The Australian* that labeled him a “meddlesome priest” (*The Australian*, 2006).

None of this matched the sheer level of attention conferred upon Jensen during his time in office, with none of the past presidents interviewed on prime time television or featured as panelists on shows like *Q&A*. Part of this can be attributed to the rotating nature of the role: ordained ministers and laypeople hold the presidency of the UCA for a period of three years, meaning that any media relationships fostered during this time are not long-term. Another explanation however, was that conservative stances evinced by the likes of Jensen and Pell were more likely to garner headlines than are those of more moderate or liberal Christians. As *Sydney Morning Herald* website contributor Dick Gross argued, “these are churches that do not wear “Kick Me” signs extolling antediluvian policies promoting celibacy or male-only ordination or gay hostility” (2012). While Gross’s comments were extreme and a product of his column’s satirical tone, the central point was still valid as it related to conservative theology’s propensity to generate controversy—and headlines.

Jensen's pervasive presence can be further attributed to his considerable skills as a communicator, and his shrewd tactics in working to charm (and, where necessary, disarm) people. Speaking as a former journalist and communications analyst, Porter had high praise for the honed communication skills of the former Archbishop, whom she described in an interview as "charming" (M. Porter, personal communication, 5 January 2013). Indeed, Jensen's 'charm and disarm' techniques were on display in many of his interviews. The 10 September 2012 *Q&A* appearance is arguably the clearest example of this technique in action in a high-pressure media setting. In a blog entry entitled 'An open letter to Catherine Deveny' (2012), former fundamentalist Christian Jane Douglas argued that Jensen drew upon this charm to make his fellow panelist appear unreasonable in comparison. Addressing her remarks directly to the comedienne with second person pronoun, Douglas argued:

*Making you seem ugly and mad is achieved through Jensen appearing the precise personification of elegant rationality and educated white maleness, all the while making vile and even outrageous statements, the import of which slide past the audience because of the persona and relational dynamic Jensen has crafted. It's clever, and Jensen appears to be an expert [...] Without ever launching into a personal attack, Jensen was able to make those watching join him in criticising you for being passionate, articulate, intelligent, and a woman. Confronted with a communication style that should have raised little comment, viewers became embarrassed that you even existed, and most of them probably weren't aware of the sleight of hand being practiced (2012).*

Douglas' analysis served to illustrate the subtle nature of Jensen's rhetoric, and the power of his occasional 'charm and disarm' approach.<sup>25</sup> One example of Jensen drawing upon this technique occurred during discussion regarding Sydney Diocese's new marriage vows where women opted to 'submit' to their husbands. Deveny had previously joked that his church provided couples with the option of getting married "in a museum by a dinosaur" (Jones, 2012). As the transcript shows, even when directly confronted like this, Jensen was able to present himself as a rational figure worthy of respect:

*Tony Jones: I think you ought to be able to respond to that but briefly, I just want to hear the...*

*Peter Jensen: Where would you start to respond to that? I'm looking for a respectful and serious discussion of very important issues (Jones, 2012).*

By appealing to the importance of “respectful and serious discussion of very important issues” (Jones, 2012), Jensen subtly implied that Deveny did not contribute to such a dialogue, without ever saying so directly. It is also worth noting that, while calling for respect and seriousness in dialogue, the former Archbishop made an argument for a policy that may be deemed sexist. Perhaps one indicator of its effectiveness was the influx of hostile tweets directed towards Deveny throughout the program, many of which were featured along the bottom of the screen during the live broadcast. Perhaps notable among these short critical offerings was *Daily Telegraph* commentator, and regular *Q&A* tweeter Joe Hildebrand, who wrote during the show that Deveny “is just like Judith Lucy, except without the humour, intelligence and wit” (Jones, 2012). That this episode could elicit such a vociferous backlash demonstrated the sheer effectiveness of Jensen’s strategy.

Jensen’s media management skills were also on full display in an interview conducted with the SBS’s Suheil Damouny on Good Friday 2011. The unedited clip, which was uploaded to the SBS YouTube page, gave a rare insight into how the former Archbishop handled his responses to an interviewer before the process of final editing took place. Responding to a number of questions regarding whether or not Good Friday had lost its significance and whether or not sporting events should not occur on the Christian holiday, Jensen displayed the ability to speak in ‘sound bites’ so as to ensure his message was disseminated. In the 3 minute 33 second video, he made reference to the importance of “the story” of Good Friday seven times (Damouny, 2011). He also made three separate references to the gospel message of Christ’s atoning sacrifice, including one explicit mention of the diocese’s preferred Penal Substitutionary model of the Atonement, “The thought that my Lord and Saviour should die on the Cross for me is something that moves me terribly, it makes me



weep” (Damouny, 2011). In another instance, he directly quoted John 3:16, “God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, and that whoever believes in him will not perish, but have eternal life”. The former Archbishop ensured that—despite the short nature of the doorstep interview—his church’s message was imparted and likely to survive the editing process.

Jensen’s burgeoning media profile cannot be attributed exclusively to the former Archbishop’s media management nous, or the charisma he displayed. Indeed, much of his profile can be attributed to the Sydney Diocese’s communications unit, Anglican Media Sydney (AMS). This team’s output includes the magazine *Southern Cross*, and the diocese’s website. Writing midway through Jensen’s episcopate, Porter outlined AMS’ success at boosting his public profile:

*There is [...] every indication that [Jensen’s] leadership charisma is being magnified by an astonishingly effective public relations exercise, which casts him as something of a celebrity. His profile in all Anglican Media Sydney products is consistently high (2006: 31).*

Porter described the unusually high attendance at Jensen’s 2005 Synod address as being one indicator of how unusually effective AMS’ public relations strategy had been in raising the Archbishop’s profile amongst his flock (Porter, 2006: 31). As well as representing the interests of the office of Archbishop, AMS also served to inform Sydney of events impacting on the diocese, and in so doing, reinforced the dominant conservative evangelical discourse. The occasionally zealous way AMS has done this is evident in past instances when the accuracy of their reporting erred enough to attract the (unwanted) scrutiny of ABC’s *Media Watch* (2006). A Madeline Collins exposé regarding the Emerging Church, published in the May 2006 issue of *Southern Cross*, was the catalyst for one particular incident. With well-known proponents including Brian D. McLaren, Rob Bell, and Dave Tomlinson, the emerging church—a broad ecclesial movement in the United Kingdom, Continental Europe, North America and Australia—aims to minister beyond the boundaries of the traditional, institutional church. Part of the movement’s broader focus is the rehabilitation of pre-medieval church rituals, alongside other forms of worship freed from the constraints of the institutional church. The Emerging Church’s theology and ecclesiology have

been criticised by conservative evangelicals, with Collins' article 'The Confessions of the Emerging Church' (2006) purporting to uncover the dangers of these experimental ministries. Perhaps the most salacious example is the focus of the Collins article: that of a Welsh ministry to a nudist colony. In the article, Collins wrote that "Emergingchurch.info [...] is set up to promote new expressions of church [...] Welsh nudist evangelism is one of those 'fresh expressions' (*Media Watch*, 2006).

As *Media Watch* exposed in its usual sardonic tone this so-called "Welsh nudist evangelism" was the subject of an April Fools Day prank on Emergingchurch.info, with *Southern Cross* apparently not picking up on the original post's humorous tone, despite the date that it was originally uploaded (*Media Watch*, 2006). It should be noted that the *Southern Cross* subsequently printed a retraction, and apologised for their inadequate fact checking (to which *Media Watch* replied "Hallelujah! At last we have a repentor" (*Media Watch*, 2006). That the error occurred in the first place, however, demonstrates the extent to which Sydney Diocese, as represented by its communications unit, sought to oppose and expose the Emerging Church movement, and the manner in which its publications represented and reinforced the dominant Sydney Anglican discourse.

## **Conclusion**

Chapter Five has contributed to *Graving Another Testament's* overall arc by examining how the dominant Sydney Anglican discourse was 'covered' by key sections of Australia's secular media during Jensen's twelve-year episcopate. The chapter has explored the various ways that columnists approached the former Archbishop and the diocese he represented. It has revealed Archbishop Jensen as a shrewd media manager, capable of deploying a broad range of interview techniques to gain a sympathetic hearing. Techniques drawn upon by the former Archbishop included answering questions with neatly packaged 'sound bites', and appeals to rationality and respect while making potentially contentious—even abhorrent—arguments. Another key finding is that, in the main, whether or not media commentators were supportive of the former Archbishop depended largely on their political leanings, with conservative commentators opposing their more progressive counterparts over their assessment and characterisation of Jensen and Sydney.

Finally, this chapter has uncovered a particular irony. For all of the ups and downs in the relationship between Australia's secular media outlets and Sydney Diocese, without the attention conferred upon Jensen in print and on Australia's airwaves, it is difficult to assume he would become the public prelate—reviled and loved in equal measure—whose career this thesis serves to analyse. From column inches in *The Monthly* and the *Sydney Morning Herald* to the bestowing of the rare honour of the ABC's Boyer lectures, many areas of Australia's media landscape served as Jensen's sounding board. He enjoyed access provided to Australia's media to an extent not afforded to other religious leaders with lesser cachet than the Anglican Archbishop of Sydney. While many members of Australia's secular print and television media heaped harsh criticisms on Archbishop Jensen during his twelve years in office, print, radio, and television continued to boost his already burgeoning profile.

## Chapter Six: Critical Discourse Analysis of Peter Jensen's Inaugural Address

*Graving Another Testament* has so far outlined the rise of Peter Jensen to the office of Archbishop. It has sought to place the career of this controversial yet charismatic leader in the context of the Sydney Diocese with which he had such a symbiotic relationship that Porter described him as being its embodiment (2006). The thesis has explored the grounds of Moore College, responsible for energising Sydney's conservative evangelical theology. It has examined the diocese's binary approach to gender and the discourse this engagement involved particularly in regards to the place of women and gays and lesbians in church life. The thesis has also critically examined Archbishop Jensen's 2001 to 2013 episcopate, first in regards to how he led his denomination's forays into Australia's public sphere during this period, and then with regards to his masterful performances as an interviewee and high profile opinion leader.

Having provided an extensive overview of Sydney Anglican discourse, and having situated Jensen as a central figure in its ongoing shaping and promulgation, *Graving Another Testament* now directly contributes to the debates surrounding Jensen's episcopate. Chapter Six analyses Peter Jensen's inaugural presidential address before the October 2001 Synod meeting, delivered by him as the new Archbishop. This was a crucial early speech for Jensen, and was a watershed moment for Sydney Diocese, which would embark on an ambitious program focused on evangelism that became the source of financial turmoil. Studying the speech is crucial for understanding Jensen's vision for the church, and thereby determining the exact role the former Archbishop played in shaping and entrenching Sydney's current form of conservative evangelism.

This chapter undertakes a detailed Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of Jensen's entire inaugural Synod address. The CDA breaks Jensen's long address into smaller sections, and applies a three-dimensional approach to analysing the text as devised by Fairclough (1989, cited in Bugg, 2012: 6). The analysis reveals Jensen's eloquent rhetorical style to be subtly and rationally expressed in the language of a sermon, and

the former Archbishop's discursive repertoire with its appeals to the authority of the Bible. The chapter's conclusion explores how these elements of the speech combine to legitimise and garner support for Jensen's radical ecclesial agenda, despite its divisive—and even sectarian—nature. It also highlights the way this speech reinforces the arguably marginal role of women in the diocese.

## **Methodology**

As indicated in *Graving Another Testament's* Introduction, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an appropriate methodological framework to meet this thesis' main aims. As a critical methodology, CDA approaches language/discourse as not a neutral means of transmitting information, but rather as social practices that serve to regulate social relations and knowledge. One of its main uses is the identification of discursive structures that reproduce dominance in society (Van Dijk, 1993: 259). In such structures, there may be unequal access to the channels of communication. For example, a Member of Parliament will have access to the parliamentary debates through which policies concerning minority groups are deliberated and decided (Van Dijk, 1993: 270). On the other hand minority groups such as women, members of certain races or religions and asylum seekers may be 'banished' from democratic participation by members of the 'in-group'. This denial of access can take a myriad of forms, such as men excluding women from taking the floor, immigration officials restricting asylum seekers from speaking to journalists or white people criticising their black counterparts for discussing racism (Van Dijk, 1993: 270).

Another key concern for CDA is an examination of the key metaphors or tropes that punctuate particular discourses. One example of how certain ways of framing an issue and the attendant tropes may differ is found in Australian indigenous policy rhetoric. Aldrich et al (2007) discerned two competing 'frames' for how governments have tended to approach this policy area with Liberal Prime Ministers employing a conservative rhetorical approach of 'personal responsibility' over and against Labor's social democratic frame of 'social justice for Aboriginals' (Aldrich et al, 2007: 132). This thesis' CDA has thus far outlined the tropes and frames that exist within Sydney Anglican discourse (such as Chapter Three's consideration of how the labeling of

women as “equal but different” ‘swaddled’ what might otherwise be deemed sexism on the part of the diocese’s leadership).

Studies that incorporate CDA vary in their use of the principles outlined above. Some studies focus on broader systems of meaning making and the tropes of particular discourses with a particular focus on how these reinforce present power relationships. Other studies focus on the construction of particular texts, with a specific study of the rhetorical resources used to grant legitimacy to particular understandings of reality. Still other studies dovetail these two approaches. For example, Augoustinos, Lecouteur and Soyland in their study into former Australian Prime Minister John Howard’s contentious 1997 Reconciliation Convention speech combined an examination of the broader discourse of white racism, which contains “rhetorically self sufficient” references to certain liberal principles (such as equality) with an analysis of how these frames and rhetorical devices are deployed within Howard’s speech (Augoustinos, Lecouteur and Soyland, 2002: 106). *Graving Another Testament* makes use of this latter approach.

As a methodology, CDA is still in its infancy. Contrasted with other methodologies with narrower scopes, its analyses seem less sophisticated (Van Dijk, 1993: 239). However, the complexity of the study of the relationship between discourse and power structures is such that it may be considered “a theoretical and methodological task of the first order” (Van Dijk, 1993: 239). Where it works particularly well is in considering how arguments and perspectives are ‘framed’ and the ways that power may be encoded. As Van Dijk wrote, this is a task of high importance:

*It is one (necessary) task to study pronouns, discourse coherence, conversational strategies or politeness phenomena, among a multitude of other structures and functions of text and talk. It is a more complex and more demanding task to study these properties of ‘text’ in relation to ‘context’, that is, as a condition or function of cognitive, social, cultural and political structures and processes. However, it is a daunting, but truly multidisciplinary, challenge to finally examine how this ‘text in context’ contributes to the*

*reproduction and demise of such complex structures as the systems of social domination* (Van Dijk, 1994: 346).

As CDA is concerned with the effect of language on power relationships, it must situate a given text within its social, political and cultural contexts. Linguist Norman Fairclough (1989, cited in Bugg, 2012: 6) advocates a three-dimensional—linguistic, discursive and social—framework for the critical analysis of a text. This process is comprised of three steps. In the first step, the text is analysed for its linguistic features (including grammar, structure and vocabulary). The second dimension of analysis is concerned with the discursive practices of a text and how it is that key arguments are ‘framed.’ The third dimension of Fairclough’s methodological framework considers the broader context, or social practices of a text, considering how these relate to broader social structures and ideological debates (Fairclough, 1989, cited in Bugg, 2012: 6). *Graving Another Testament’s* CDA considers each of the dimensions of a text proposed by Fairclough’s framework. Discussion of findings divides the analysed text into smaller, thematically contiguous, segments of the text that are included above the lines of commentary.

### **Critical Discourse Analysis of Archbishop Jensen’s Presidential Address to Synod, 26 October 2001**

The Mission, as it would come to be known, was the topic of Jensen’s first presidential address to the 2001 Synod. This address has been selected for particular attention mainly because, as an inaugural address, it is unique in how it summarises so much of Jensen’s vision for Sydney Diocese. While the plan for the Mission preceded Jensen’s episcopate—a fact that the Archbishop observed in his text (Excerpt XXX) —its ambitious goals and the cost associated with it defined much of the Jensen legacy. The CDA below analyses the speech using Fairclough’s three-dimensional approach, and engages in a closer reading by breaking it into shorter excerpts. For the sake of brevity the analysis omits the final section of Jensen’s speech, which was devoted to procedural matters (including a list of ministers who had retired that year). This minor removal notwithstanding, the presidential address was rich, tightly written and, as indicated above, emblematic of Jensen’s early episcopate.

Jensen's first presidential address to the Sydney Diocese's Synod marked a momentous occasion where the new Archbishop outlined his radical ecclesial vision which placed special emphasis on the Mission with its stated goal of recruiting ten per cent of Sydney into 'Bible based' (read: conservative evangelical) churches. The purpose of the speech was to convince the diocese to come on board with the Archbishop's agenda; in this case, by approving and adopting a mission statement outlining the Mission's vision and practice. In an interview conducted for this thesis, Porter, who is herself a communications professional with more than twenty years experience, described the shaping of an address to convince a Synod audience as being one of Jensen's strengths. She described the Jensen speeches as "a masterpiece of communication theory put into practice." The most important principle of all communication," she went on to say "is 'know your audience', and these are crafted spectacularly for his audience" (M. Porter, personal communication, 5 January 2013). According to Porter, Jensen used a keen awareness of his audience to gain their consent. She outlined how, when preparing his text, the former Archbishop strategically targeted those who were undecided on his agenda, and thus masterfully gained support from the majority of this constituency:

*When Peter Jensen speaks to his Synod, he's not trying to convince the representatives of St James King Street or Christ Church St Laurence [...] He's not worried about what we in the rest of [the Australian church] think. What he needs to do is bring the heart and soul of his diocese with him, and he's been brilliant at that (M. Porter, personal communication, 5 January 2013).*

To make some structural observations, Jensen's inaugural address was a long formal speech (its transcript well over 9,000 words, most of which has been included in this chapter). It was divided into three parts. In the first of these (Excerpts I to XII), Jensen established a theme of crisis, arguing that, for the declining Anglican Church, Australia, and the world, the forces of secularism, modernism and postmodernism had eroded the place of God, placing many in danger of the coming wrath. In the second section of the address (Excerpts XIII to XXV), Jensen turned to his ambitious agenda for the revitalising of the diocese, spelled out in the mission statement that the



Archbishop commended to the Synod. The final third of the address (Excerpts XXVI to XXXVII) focused on the Synod meeting at hand and the final ambit of Jensen's effort to garner support for the mission statement.

To turn to the speech's discursive elements, Jensen largely focused his address on a conservative evangelical audience. As such, he made a number of overarching assertions that he apparently did not need to justify or 'prove', given their status as norms within Sydney Anglican discourse. In keeping with his diocese's Calvinist emphasis on the intellectual aspects of Christianity (Hilliard, 1997: 103), Jensen couched his statements in the language of rationality. However, as the CDA below demonstrates, the former Archbishop did not actually make rational arguments, resorting instead to making assertions that could not be proven or falsified. As veteran philosopher Antony Flew wrote:

*Now to make a rational argument that such and such is the case is necessary to provide reasons to support one's case. Suppose that we are in doubt what someone who gives vent to an utterance of this sort is arguing, or suppose that, more radically, we are skeptical about whether they are really arguing anything at all, one way of trying to understand their utterance is to attempt to find what evidence, if any, they offer to support the truth of their claims. For if the utterance is indeed rational and an argument, it must provide reasons in its favour from science or philosophy. And anything that would count against the utterance, or which would induce the speaker to withdraw it and to admit it had been mistaken, must be laid out. But if there is no reason and no evidence offered in its support, then there is no reason or evidence that it is a rational argument (Flew, 2007: 87).*

One clear example of when Jensen drew on rational language to make an unprovable assertion occurred in Excerpt XII where he said, "unbelief is profoundly unloving because it gives our fellow citizens only husks". While containing the signposts of a rational argument, such as the use of the conjunctive 'because', there is no further "reason or evidence offered in its support" (Flew, 2007: 87). As is to be expected

from a speech to a Christian audience, the presidential address made the further presumption of theism, and Jensen did not seek to provide any evidence or argument for the existence of God. In so doing, the former Archbishop ran counter to what Flew argued should be the basis of any exchange between Christians and non-Christians: the presumption of atheism. By this, Flew was not saying that all parties must reject belief in God, but rather that the onus of proof lay with theists. This, he said, ensures that theists' arguments start at the beginning point of establishing what they mean to describe when they discuss 'God' (Flew, 2004: 52–53).<sup>26</sup>

A number of other assertions that Jensen made in the address included the presumption that scripture condemns homosexual acts, a stance that Jensen describes as a "standard ethical commitment", that—if the church is to remain faithful to Scripture—women cannot be ordained, and that non-Christians are destined for hell. While these are all beliefs that were already held by a sizeable portion of Jensen's audience, by drawing upon them in his inaugural address, the former Archbishop normalised them. In terms of discursive resources that helped reinforce his conclusions, Jensen drew legitimacy from the traditional succession of his office, church tradition, and—in what has already been demonstrated to be part of his signature rhetoric—appealed to the authority of scripture in order to encourage his audience's consent to his plans and to call them to action.

The timing of Jensen's address at the Synod meeting played an important part in the construction of meaning. Slightly more than one month removed from the World Trade Centre bombings of 11 September 2001—and the subsequent vandalism of the Presbyterian College of Montreal with the words 'Religion Kills' (Hall, 2003: 1)—Jensen's discussion of religious fundamentalism, and his insistence that he and his diocese were not fundamentalists, had all the more currency and urgency. Jensen's repeated discussion of fundamentalism was in part a rebuttal to Graeme Lyall's accusation (McGillion, 2005: 104-105). The above-mentioned event of 9/11 also served as a reference point—an apocalyptic event that led Jensen to declare the end of postmodernism, citing the necessity of absolutes. Furthermore, Jensen broke with church tradition, by choosing not to wear the traditional Archbishop's outfit, which included a purple shirt and clerical collar. This paralinguistic feature of the address signalled that the former Archbishop, much like his former RePA supporters,

eschewed the trappings of Anglican Church traditions, emphasising instead his conservative evangelicalism.

To consider the social dimension to Jensen's presidential address, the speech featured a blistering cultural critique. This included attacks on Australia's public education curriculum and the wider church for falling prey to secularism and relativism. Analysing the speech's social dimension also reveals its particular sectarianism whereby the former Archbishop appeared concerned solely for the wellbeing of his diocese. It also uncovers the codification of gender relations as Jensen sought to justify why women could not be ordained. More broadly, the speech was emblematic of Jensen's episcopate: it signalled that the former Archbishop would lead Sydney Diocese into a harder new direction.

Although Jensen's 2001 October Synod Address is one he delivered years ago, the CDA of this speech will be analysed using the present tense. While Jensen gave the speech to a particular audience the written text of this speech is accessible via the Sydney Anglicans' website and thus is a living text.

Excerpt I

*Fundamentalism is an ugly word, with a fearful significance.*

*Strangely, it began life well, almost a hundred years ago. Powerful forces within our culture sought to deny the orthodox Christian faith. Humanity seized the central place, demanded freedom from God and called for the end of the authority of the Bible. In the face of modernistic attacks on the Bible and orthodox Christian faith, a number of evangelicals issued booklets defending the fundamentals. On the whole these fundamentalists made sober attempts to guard the truth; perhaps they were not radical enough, given the challenge of modern thought. Certainly it became a popular movement in the sense that its booklets were often aimed at the mass market rather than the scholarly world.*

*Unfortunately, it was not long before fundamentalism began to be associated with irrational, sub-standard defences of Christianity, often couched in shrill language, and accompanied by a literalistic reading of the Bible. It developed a reputation for fanaticism, and was scorned by cultured people. Today, fundamentalism implies an anti-intellectual, backward-looking and ugly zeal in the cause of religion.*

Jensen begins the address here with a short sentence. He uses emotive adjectives—ugly and fearful—for dramatic effect and to draw his audience’s attention. His consistent use of complex sentence types draws his ideas together intricately and place him immediately as a scholar. This starts with the tone of a founding narrative, as the Archbishop engages his audience in a story about the beginnings of fundamentalism. This marks the beginning of Jensen’s use of fundamentalism as a recurring theme, one that serves multiple rhetorical purposes. Its usage gives a clue to the context of Jensen’s speech. As mentioned above, Graham Lyall’s accusation that the Archbishop was a “fundamentalist Christian” prone to “superstitious ramblings” (McGillion, 2005: 95), is undoubtedly fresh in the minds of the Synod audience. Jensen’s use of the term here, including his definition of being “anti-intellectual, backward looking and ugly...” foreshadows his denial of the title for himself and his diocese. Indeed, Jensen goes on to provide an historical interpretation of the rise of Christian fundamentalism. In accordance with Sydney Diocese’s occasionally separatist language—the church as standing against a wider, unbelieving society—Jensen subtly argues here that early fundamentalism was the result of anti-Christian secularism. In this case, he suggests that this is due to the advent of modernism. The Archbishop again sets up a recurring theme in his speech, that of secularism as a pervasive force that his diocese must resist, with the ‘classical’ evangelical theology that he intends to fortify. Jensen begins the second and third paragraphs of Excerpt I with evaluative descriptors, namely “strangely” and “unfortunately”. These communicate to his audience how he intends the concepts he is introducing to be interpreted.

Excerpt II

*And yet, in the contemporary world, we cannot dismiss it; not when it is linked to violence and terrorism; and not when we are called fundamentalists. The greatest apologetic challenge at the moment is to distinguish classical, orthodox Christianity from fundamentalism. An amazing, frightening consequence of the terrorism of September 11th is that all religion is being dismissed as violent and evil. Under the heading Damn them all, Nick Cohen of the London Observer (October 7th) writes: If blame is to be cast, then the world’s religions must take the major share.*

*Fundamentalism is not just Christian. Something of the sort has arisen in a number of religions as a*

*response to militant unbelief. Western secularism, sometimes abetted by the Christian missionary movement has penetrated cultures worldwide. The temper of modernistic secular thought is aggressively imperialistic; in the form of globalisation it respects no national boundaries. It awards the glittering prizes of power, knowledge and wealth, but at a price. Fundamentalism is, in part, self-defence against modernity. It is an attempt to inhabit the past, to rebuild the fortified castles of ancient days.*

*Established cultures show a two-fold response to western secularism. To some extent they capitulate to the gift of technological power and its apparently atheistic scientific foundation. They become modern. On the other hand, they also develop an antagonistic response, using the real or imagined standards of the past to judge the present. The rate of change is too rapid; the loss of power too great; the walls go up. There is an intense hostility to freedom of thought, speech and action. There is a fundamentalist Islam and Hinduism, as communities and cultures protect themselves from simply becoming western and secular. Paradoxically, the fundamentalists are often adept at using the latest technology in the cause of the pre-modern ideas. Ancient thoughts travel on the modern web.*

Jensen continues the theme established in his introduction with a slightly more transparent allusion to the Lyall comments “not when we are called fundamentalists.” He introduces the phrase “classical, orthodox Christianity” here, which serves to signify the theology promulgated by Jensen and likeminded members of his Synod audience. By referring to it as “classical” and “orthodox”, two phrases that are held within many sections of Christianity as signifiers of reliability and right belief, he grants this theology legitimacy over and against fundamentalism, a theme he returns to more explicitly in later sections of his address. As mentioned briefly in the introduction to this CDA, Jensen’s reference to 11 September has particular power and potency in this address’ context; held just over a month after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre and Pentagon. 11 September is undoubtedly still vivid in his audience’s minds and in violent detail; a fresh event whose significance, cause and meaning are still being worked out and debated. 11 September is introduced as a theme that gives Jensen’s speech, (and the mission statement he proposes) significant weight. Jensen returns to the use of dualistic language, as he defines the event as the result of a clash between the opposing forces of fundamentalism and secularism. He describes these in depersonalised terms, using the term ‘it’ as a descriptor. In this excerpt he makes use of the triadic structure (“it respects no national boundaries.” “It awards the glittering prizes” “It is an attempt to inhabit the past”) with the repetition

...serving to underscore and reinforce the danger of these forces. This technique is a common one used in sermons to underscore important points. By drawing on religious language such as this, Jensen imbues the address with the flavour of a sermon. His continued use of emotive adjectives pepper the text with greater zeal, using words such as ‘violent’, ‘evil’ and ‘militant’. This writing style becomes increasingly lyrical, drawing his audiences in with this persuasive speech style as the audience awaits his words in anticipation. This lyricism brings a particular sheen to his work and provides it with the impression of wisdom.

### Excerpt III

*Of course, fundamentalism is not the only religious response to modernity. Some are conservative, others radical; some make minimal adjustments to earlier theology; others recast Christianity in the light of modernity. Some are massive intellectual constructs, like the works of the great Swiss theologian Karl Barth. Others are spirit-based revivals like the extraordinarily successful Pentecostal movement.*

*The strategic issue for Christians is very pressing. Is it better to join in the dance of secularism with the attendant danger of seduction; or is it better to be a wallflower and sit coyly at a safe distance from the wicked fun? In these terms, fundamentalists are uncouth gatecrashers at life’s great rave party.*

In Excerpt III Jensen enlarges his theme of modernity and religious responses to it. He mentions Barth, a widely respected theologian who was one of the authors of the Barmen declaration and who has been dubbed “the first truly postmodern theologian” (Tomlinson, 1995: 110).<sup>27</sup> Jensen’s list of responses to modernity continues with the use of dualistic language, with three pairs of binary terms (conservative/radical, earlier theology/modernity, intellectual constructs/spirit based revivals). He continues to use contrast while introducing what will prove to be another repeated metaphor: that of a dance party, where Christians are in danger of secularism’s “seduction” while fundamentalists play the role of “wallflowers”. This image serves the Archbishop’s purpose of casting his diocese (and himself) among those who manage to join this dance without being “seduced”. As is expanded upon later in this CDA, this is a sentiment that verges on sectarianism with the Sydney Diocese held to be exceptional over and against other religious groupings. The repetitive use of sentence openers, “some” and “others”, simplify his message and suggest that the Archbishop

is aware of multiple responses to ‘Modernism’. This grants him scholarly legitimacy and allows him to appeal to his audience to trust his educated judgements, even where these necessitate the subjugation of minorities such as women and homosexuals.

Excerpt IV

*The modernistic culture takes swift revenge on any claims to religious truth. For Christianity, it has proved to be an extremely dangerous dancing partner. Secularism seeks to conquer all other thought forms, especially religious ones. Some of the greatest makers of the thought of the twentieth century world were explicitly anti-Christian; people like Sigmund Freud, Jean-Paul Sartre and Karl Marx. Many of the Christians who recast their religion in radical ways have in reality become captive to secular thought. Conservatives criticise these as liberals, and they tend to denounce conservative Christians as fundamentalist. In this way, conservatism is linked with a dangerous social movement, which seems anti-intellectual, fanatical, socially disruptive, racist, sexist and even politically dangerous. But this throwing of stones is a self-defeating policy.*

*Fundamentalists retreat from the modern world, refusing to join in the dance at all. But they are still present at the party. Their great contribution is their critique of radical Christianity and the complacency of the mainstream church. What they say to us is, that if we keep compromising with the world, the church will disappear, for no one will want to belong to it. And in this, at least, they have been proved right. Modernised Christianity is so anaemic that the denominations that embraced it are in danger of disappearing.*

Following his earlier discussion regarding fundamentalism, Jensen introduces what will prove to be a sustained attack on liberal Christianity, pillared here for its willingness to capitulate. He describes the struggle between conservatives and liberals as a self-defeating “throwing of stones,” a phrase instantly recognisable to his Christian audience familiar with Jesus’ words “Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her” (John 8:7, NRSV). Despite this injunction against this “self-defeating policy”—Jensen engages in his own “throwing of stones”—against ‘liberal’ Christians who he accuses of becoming “captive to secular thought” and hastening the disappearance of their denominations. This criticism of “radical” Christianity furthers the rhetorical shift from the more irenic style of Jensen’s predecessor. As Porter said in an interview conducted for this thesis, “the liberal tradition—such as it was in Sydney—was much more respected under

Goodhew” (M. Porter, personal communication, 5 January 2013). Jensen’s closing sentence draws on a medical metaphor, as he describes churches that have embraced “modernised Christianity” as “anaemic” and—in keeping with the address’ theme of crisis—“in danger of disappearing”. The Archbishop makes a remarkable shift toward the use of active voice where he had previously and predominately relied on the lulling of passive use. This sudden shift in focus shocks the audience into an impression of attack as the liberal Christian action is described actively, “they [liberal Christians] tend to denounce conservative Christians as fundamentalist”. Comparatively, passive voice is employed to place conservatives at the mercy of these liberal attacks, “conservatism is linked with a dangerous social movement, which seems anti-intellectual, fanatical, socially disruptive, racist and even politically dangerous”.

Excerpt V

*I am an evangelical Christian, but I am not a fundamentalist. Neither are the evangelical Christians of this diocese. My consecration as bishop was a symbolic moment. It was incredibly moving for me to be consecrated by (among others) my honoured predecessor Harry Goodhew, and to be presented by two former Archbishops of this diocese, Sir Marcus Loane and Bishop Donald Robinson. Here is an apostolic succession worth having; a succession in the classical apostolic faith as expressed in the reformed Anglican Church. Loane, Robinson, Goodhew; who could ever pretend that such great leaders are fundamentalist. I want to place on public record my own profound sense of indebtedness to them. Imagine how this pygmy feels to follow such as these; let alone Barker and Mowll, the greatest of our 19th and 20th century bishops respectively. But follow them I do, and their legacy to me—and of this diocese—is not fundamentalism.*

Jensen resumes his prior discussion of fundamentalism with the first explicit rebuttal of the Lyall accusation. This excerpt heralds Jensen’s first use of personal pronouns, ‘I’ and ‘me’. It is interesting that he chooses to use this point to refer to himself, perhaps setting himself up in answer to the challenges he had proposed in the accusations of the previous excerpt. He does this via yet another short sentence: “I am an evangelical Christian but I am not a fundamentalist”. This type of compound sentence is a typical convention of spoken texts, offering simplicity to a sometimes-challenging message. Jensen stresses that his consecration was part of a broader



“apostolic succession worth having.” This emphasis on inherited wisdom and continuity is common in conservative religious and political discourses.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, Jensen makes reference to “the greatest of our 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century bishops” who he follows and whose legacy he honours. That Jensen chooses Archbishop Howard K. Mowll as “the greatest” 20<sup>th</sup> Century bishop is telling. From 1933 to his death in 1958, Mowll was a conservative missionary Archbishop who worked to reform his diocese and counter the spread of a more liberal Anglicanism. As Mascord wrote, “Sydney Diocese turned decisively in a conservative direction under the leadership of Howard Mowll, so much so that those in the diocese who were more open to contemporary scholarship felt sidelined” (2012, 151). Jensen’s choice of Mowll for the title of “greatest bishop” speaks volumes about what he thinks constitutes effective leadership for Sydney Diocese. The endorsement may therefore also serve to foreshadow the championing of conservative causes in Archbishop Jensen’s own episcopate.

The Archbishop’s appeal to the tradition of “apostolic succession” further lends credibility to his already controversial leadership—and legitimates what is in many ways a radical ecclesial agenda. The denial of fundamentalism takes place four times in this excerpt, first for Jensen himself, for other conservative evangelicals in the diocese, for former Archbishops present at Jensen’s consecration, and finally for the legacy bequeathed by past leaders. In the case of the third denial, Jensen’s blunt rhetorical question, “who could ever pretend that such great leaders are fundamentalist (sic)”, summarily dismisses such an accusation.

Excerpt VI

*I read the Bible literally that is, on its own terms but not literalistically. I read the Bible informed by the great classical expressions of our faith. My understanding of Jesus Christ impels me on to the dance floor of the world. His incarnation tells me that I must be involved in the world; I must learn its language; I must engage with and learn from - its ideas; I must love its citizens and give myself to justice and works of compassion. But my understanding of the death of Jesus Christ also impels me to try to resist its blandishments, and to enter the world as a missionary. To love this neighbour I must also share the gospel of Jesus Christ with him or her, in all its purity and its power.*

Jensen begins this portion of his speech claiming to “read the Bible literally that is, on its own terms but not literalistically.” As Porter (2006) observed, “This is a highly nuanced distinction, so nuanced that its meaning is not immediately clear” (23). Indeed, Jensen does not explain the difference between the two terms. One example of what the Archbishop may be referring to is that he is not beholden to a six-day understanding of Creation (Porter, 2006: 23). In any event, Jensen’s claim to read Scripture “on its own terms” is a bold one; any biblical scholar is well aware of how difficult the task of exegesis can be. Given that the Hebrew Bible and New Testament are thousands of years old “they reflect entirely different thought-worlds from that of the twenty-first century, and are invariably imbued with the ancient cultural patterns, norms and expectations from which they were written” (Porter, 2006: 26). Jensen’s claim that he reads the Bible “on its own terms” is therefore to express proficiency in an immensely difficult task. Furthermore, for Jensen’s Synod audience, which as he points out later in his speech, contains “many of us” likeminded conservative evangelicals (Excerpt XI), this claim to a faithful reading of scripture is a signal of theological trustworthiness.

Jensen further denies the charge of fundamentalism in this section of the speech, stating emphatically that his Christology “impels” him to return to the dance floor first referred to in Excerpt III. Vis-à-vis the understanding that fundamentalists withdraw from the world, the Archbishop argues that engagement is a requirement of faith, a consequence of the doctrine of Christ’s incarnation. This engagement, however, is on Jensen’s own terms: “as a missionary” who will “share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.” In response to this point, Porter (2006) argued, “The express purpose [...] is not to serve the needs of the community primarily but to convert those outside the ‘Bible believing churches’ and make them insiders” (32).

Excerpt VII

*The radical Christianity represented at its most extreme by Bishop Spong is also missionary. In his case, secularism has turned him, and he has become an unwitting agent of the very forces which are attempting to destroy the gospel; in my view, a fisher of men amongst the Christians for a cause which is not Christ’s. Such Christianity has compromised the purity of the gospel and therefore lost its saving*

*power. In particular, it has undermined the authority of the Bible. Our nation needs a Christianity which is classical but not fundamentalist.*

*I have been trying since my election to argue the case for this intelligent Christianity in the public arena, actually to speak about God and the gospel from the Bible in a way that is clearly relevant to the world in which we live. I hope that you will be glad to be Anglican because public Anglicans stand for the gospel of Jesus. It will only be on those terms that Anglicanism will remain one of the most important elements in the Australian community. It won't do so by presenting as a pallid religious version of humanism. I want the media to report the Christian message, and not substitute a secularist twist for what we actually say. But for this to happen we must first speak Christianly, that is about Jesus, and, secondly, relevantly, that is to and about our humanity. To talk about social issues is a necessity; to talk only about social issues without God and his word is a cop-out.*

Jensen begins this section with an attack on prolific liberal author John Shelby Spong. By identifying Spong as an adherent of “radical Christianity [...] at its most extreme”, the Archbishop marginalises his hermeneutic and theology as unsound. Jensen calls for a Christianity that is ‘classical but not fundamentalist.’ Advocating this salvific Christianity is a vocation that the Archbishop claims for himself, signalling that he will champion a public theology that stands against the forces of secularism. In describing Spong’s strand of Christianity with another medical metaphor, “pallid religious version of humanism”, Jensen further dismisses this tradition as sickly and derivative of secular thought. Ironically enough, such a description serves to further the impression of humanism as secular in origin, despite the Christian heritage of this philosophy. Through use of repetition with the phrase “to talk about social issues is a necessity, to talk about social issues without God and his word is a cop out”, Jensen further underscores his assertion that Spong’s is an understanding of the faith that—unlike his own—is not scriptural or, to use the phraseology of his diocese, ‘Bible based.’ This description of a particular form of theology further marginalises those at variance with Sydney Anglican discourse, and perhaps deepens division within the Global Anglican Communion.

Excerpt VIII

*So far I have portrayed modernism and secularism as extremely powerful forces, capable of destroying the church in the west. But, of course, they are nihilistic forces; they have nothing to satisfy the soul or*

*save the lives of men and women. They are community destroying, not community affirming. Fundamentalists are not stupid. Whether in the US or in Pakistan, whether Christian or Muslim, they know emptiness when they see it. And modernism is malleable. It is subject to change, to transmogrification [“To change as if by magic” — Macquarie Dictionary “Strange or grotesque transformation” —Oxford English Dictionary]. According to the analysts, modernism, with its heavy emphasis on human reason, has now become post-modernism: that is, reason has failed us and we now have an acute attack of relativism, a sort of peritonitis of the soul. The culture is all at sea; it needs a religious harbour; it needs to know its God. Fundamentalism is a powerful witness to that enduring need.*

Jensen refocuses the subject of his attack from secularism to postmodernism. As is the case with Excerpt IV’s depiction of “anaemic” modernised Christianity, Jensen describes postmodernism in this section using pathological terms; “a sort of peritonitis of the soul.” This distrust of postmodernism is a common trope of conservative discourses generally, and Sydney Anglican discourse specifically. Another example that illustrates this conservative distrust comes from an Australian political leader. Then-Federal Treasurer Peter Costello told students at the 2003 National Students Leadership Forum on Faith and Values to beware a dangerous philosophy called postmodernism (Maddox, 2005: 182). According to Costello, this school of thought taught that all values were equally good and that they may believe whatever they wanted. Using the example of a suicide bomber, the Treasurer cautioned his audience that they were better off with “the ethic and the faith background that we come from” (Maddox, 2005: 183). This reductive description of postmodernism as relativistic and dangerous becomes more evident in subsequent sections of Jensen’s presidential address.

Excerpt IX

*By labelling classical Christianity fundamentalist, our society, and many in the Christian movement dismiss what they should promote. Talk about God is silenced; we are tamed; we are lampooned; occasionally, we are even demonised. All very well. But in doing this the world is eroding a form of the Christian faith which is proven to be spiritually satisfying, intellectually engaged and highly active in doing good works. You may criticise fundamentalism as both intellectually disreputable and politically*

*dangerous, but the vacuous emptiness of secularism is no alternative. This will only prove the fundamentalist case; it will provoke a fundamentalist response. The adolescent tendency to be cynical and dismissive of all religion except designer-Buddhism has become clichéd, tiresome and even perilous. What is needed is the satisfying wellspring of the true and living God himself. You can shove true theology out the back door, but there will be a queue of false religions at the front door before you have time to sit down in front of the telly.*

*Classical Christianity is based above all in the Bible. The scriptures have priority over all the thoughts of the human heart whether in the tradition of the church or in human experience. But orthodoxy is not in an intellectual isolation ward. In the first place it acknowledges the immense debt we owe to the Christians who have gone before us. It learns to interpret the Bible in the light of the reading of the Bible down through the centuries. In particular it learns from the early centuries of the church's reading of scripture, and it learns from the Reformation of the sixteenth century as well as the genuine advances of the more recent historical approach. And orthodox evangelicalism is also prepared to learn from contemporary thought. It recognises that current experience will always force us to ask new questions of the Bible and to discover truths of God's revelation which may have been neglected or not understood.*

Jensen again draws a subtle comparison here between the 'in group' members of his diocese and the 'out group' of the church's critics. This comes by way of two contrasting sets of present participles woven into the first paragraph. The members of the diocese in-group—introduced again with the first person pronoun "we"—are described as "tamed" "lampooned" and even "demonised" by their opponents. On the other hand, Jensen purports that his diocese's members are adherents to a version of Christianity described using present participles that carry positive connotations: "spiritually satisfying, intellectually engaged and highly active in doing good works." Jensen's technique of dropping his tone from academic to informal language is also evident here, as he draws on several colloquialisms in the sentence "you can shove true theology out the back door, but there will be a queue of false religions at the front door before you have time to sit down in front of the telly." Operating on a number of levels, both formal and informal, this paragraph serves to further a particular sectarianism, as Sydney Diocese is presented as a keeper of this "true theology" against a rampaging horde of non-believers.

Excerpt X

*Classical Christianity calls us to believe together that we may mission together. We ought to recognise the sad truth, however, that under the impact of modernity and now post-modernity, our denomination will rarely or never achieve unity of the faith. Our witness is compromised by intractable differences of faith.*

*There was a defining moment at this year's General Synod which illustrates this. In the debate on homosexuality, Dr Glenn Davies said: I hold the view that the plain teaching of Scripture is that homosexual practice is outside the purposes of God for humankind, and is against God's laws, and therefore will exclude a person from the Kingdom of God. That, I take it, is the teaching you will find in 1 Corinthians 6:9.*

*In the same debate, Dr Cathy Thomson, a learned theologian from Adelaide, said: any contemporary study of how texts can be interpreted suggests that it is impossible to give precedence to the text itself, as indeed the text finds expression only in its apprehension by the human intellect; and the text can only realise meaning through its mediation within the context of a community, here; a faith tradition.*

*In short, our profound differences about homosexuality owe a great deal to how we read, and especially how we read the Bible. And what makes it impossible to give precedence to the text to adopt the plain or literal reading of scripture, is the person of the reader or readers, the fact that to reading we bring of necessity our personal prejudices, understandings and emotions. The reader or even the community which reads—is integral to what is read.*

*It is hard to exaggerate the significance of this clash of approach. I want to assure you that we are dealing here with matters of great missionary as well as spiritual moment. It is precisely the question of how we should read which is on the agenda of the schools and universities of our nation. Teachers and students are adjudicating between the rights of the reader and the rights of the author to establish what texts mean. If we adopt Dr Thomson's approach, there is no plain meaning of a text; of the sort Dr Davies wishes us to believe in. I am concerned that we may become masters of the text, masters of its many possible meanings. Valid human communication seems doomed. The undoubted fact that reading requires a reader, has been turned into the determinative fact for the establishment of meaning. At the extreme, which is much further than Dr Thomson went—it says unabashedly, the reader is the Author when you get to that point you are in a contest with God, to establish who owns his text, for he claims to be the ultimate Author.*

Jensen begins this portion of the address with the deductive phrase, “Classical Christianity calls us to believe together that we may mission together.” This phrase is credal in character, as it makes use of the first person pronoun “we” to indicate shared values, is repetitive to ensure memorability, and calls its audience to obeisance. In light of this ideal of united conviction, the Archbishop laments division

in the Anglican Church, a sorry state of affairs that he blames on the twin forces of modernism and postmodernism. While Jensen does not make any obvious calls for obedience on the part of his audience, the phrase “believe together” appears to require unity through uniformity with differences of opinion and ‘clashes’ of hermeneutical approach cast as ills to be avoided in order for the church to remain missional.

In order to illustrate his point regarding the national church’s disunity, Jensen draws upon two disparate contributions to a recent General Synod debate (again, an event that is undoubtedly still fresh in the minds of his Synod audience). The first of these is a viewpoint expressed by Sydney Diocese’s own Glenn Davies, who is (perhaps unsurprisingly) later revealed as sharing Jensen’s sympathies (and in Excerpt XXV as an incoming member of the diocese’s Standing Committee). Davies’ claim of holding the “plain view” of scripture is common to Sydney Anglican discourse; that he adheres to faithful, right understanding of scripture evident in Excerpt VI, among other sections of the speech. As Porter (2006) observes, for a scholar to argue this adherence to ‘plain’ meaning is to accuse others who disagree of distorting scripture (27).

Jensen prefaces his discussion of Cathy Thomson’s views with the simple description of her as “a learned theologian from Adelaide.” This seemingly respectful introduction gives his subsequent comments a veneer of civility immediately before he dismisses these views with the concern that they lead to readers becoming “masters of the text”. This technique serves to give Jensen the appearance of calm reasonableness before he begins his attack. It has been a common feature of the Archbishop’s debate rhetoric, emphasise the need for “a respectful discussion” regarding hot-button issues such as the life expectancy of homosexuals (Jones, 2012). This appeal to respect, followed up by vociferous debate is visible elsewhere in the presidential address (such as in Excerpt XXXVI discussed below).

Jensen draws upon a ‘straw man’ argument at the end of this section. He describes a ‘more extreme’ version of Thomson’s approach—held by nobody in particular—solely for the purposes of rhetorically dismantling this point of view. He does this with another appeal to the authority of scripture as the word of God “who claims to be the ultimate Author.”

Excerpt XI

*I am an orthodox evangelical Christian by conviction. I am grieved by our disunity in the faith. But in this perilous moment, I join hands with classical Christians of all types, especially in the Anglican Church. I am saying to you that whatever differences we have; and they are significant - we must see that the threat to foundational beliefs and standard ethical commitments is now being posed by how we read the text of scripture, and that we must not dance with the world at this point. I am saying that we have in the scriptural gospel a message of enormous significance for the whole community. I am saying that we must not allow ourselves to be dismissed as fanatics and fundamentalists, but have confidence in the integrity of our message and in the plain teaching of scripture. I am saying that we should affirm and promote without embarrassment classical, orthodox Christianity; Anglican Christianity and, for many of us, Anglican evangelical Christianity.*

Jensen begins this section with a confession of faith as “an orthodox evangelical Christian by conviction.” By using the emotive term “grieved” when he says that he is “*grieved* by the disunity in the faith,” Jensen presents himself as someone with a personal stake in the unity of the church, threatened as it is by the debate regarding homosexuality and approaches to biblical texts. The Archbishop also describes this disunity in urgent terms (“in this perilous moment”), which serves to fold the same-sex controversy into his wider theme of a world and church in crisis. Using the adjectival pre-modifiers, “foundational” and “standard”, Jensen describes Sydney Diocese’s predominant hermeneutic regarding homosexuality—and, thereby, the attendant marginalising of gay and lesbian people—as a matter of biblical and moral normalcy. Returning to the metaphor of a rave established in Excerpt III, Jensen makes another plea of his audience not to “dance with the world at this point.” This, much like the condemnation of “modernised Christianity” in Excerpt IV, subtly serves to dismiss other Christians’ exegetical approaches, with those welcoming of same-sex unions standing accused of aiding and abetting the conspiring forces of secularism and modernity.

The Archbishop makes this same point more explicitly when he repeats the phrase “the plain teaching of scripture”, evident in Davies’ arguments against homosexuality during the 2001 General Assembly (Excerpt X). Its inclusion here further indicates its



status as a central trope of Sydney Anglican discourse. Jensen further incorporates the triadic structure in this section. He repeats the phrase “I am saying” three times to reinforce the weight of his conviction behind each utterance. He also sequentially names three interrelated forms of Christianity: “classical orthodox Christianity”, “Anglican Christianity” and “Anglican evangelical Christianity.” By naming these three (slightly) distinctive strands, Jensen appears to acknowledge church diversity. As observed in this CDA’s introduction, part of the presidential address’ purpose is to convince certain audience members that the Archbishop is leading his diocese down the correct path.

Excerpt XII

*Unbelief is profoundly unloving, because it gives our fellow citizens only husks; it reaches into their homes and weakens them; it leaves their children without an understanding of God’s law; it denies them the true knowledge of their Creator; it leaves them under the condemnation of God and not his blessing. Furthermore, secularism reaches into our homes. It is not as though we can isolate ourselves from the world. The children of Christian families may well be better equipped and better guarded against the world, but they can never be made invulnerable to it. They, too, are being taught new, subjective ways of reading texts. The state of the culture remains of high significance to us whether we like it or not. Secularism damages the nation and fills the halls of hell.*

Jensen returns to his discussion of secularism, drawing on the rhetorical device of repetition and making another aspersion that “unbelief is profoundly unloving.” He portrays secularism here in monstrous terms; it “reaches into our homes” and “damages the nation.” While Jensen couches this section in the language of logic (such as use of the word “furthermore” to introduce a point) he makes a number of unsubstantiated assertions. Among these is the suspicion that he expresses towards contemporary pedagogy, with students “being taught new, subjective ways of reading texts”, without backing this argument up with any examples from Australian curricula. That these ways of reading are said to be *new* is not incidental as this implies a distrust of new or novel ideas, a distrust common in conservative discourses and by implication emphasising the importance of tradition and continuity with the past. This is also in keeping with a broader pattern within conservative discourses: that is, a series of wide-ranging debates regarding contemporary pedagogy. Maddox

traced these back to the 1970s, when the Man: A Course of Study (MACOS) course was introduced. As she wrote:

*Back in the innocent 1970s, debate about the social sciences curriculum was referred to in the newspapers as the ‘MACOS controversy’. If it had persisted, it would probably have been renamed the ‘social science wars’. By the turn of the millennium, a whole conflagration of pedagogical conflicts was said to be engulfing Australian schools: teachers, academics and parents were being exhorted to take up arms in the ‘culture wars’, ‘history wars’, ‘science wars’ and even ‘Christmas wars’ (Maddox, 2014: xxiii).*

John Howard was a conservative leader whose contributions to this debate are well recorded. During his final term as Prime Minister, Howard argued that Australia needed a national curriculum that could guard against “progressive theories and education fads” (Maiden, 2007). For all of his disagreements with the Prime Minister regarding asylum seekers and indigenous issues, Jensen and Howard’s shared cultural conservatism is on display in this section of the inaugural address, with the Archbishop going so far as to argue that these ‘subjective’ ways of reading are even damaging to children. At this point, Jensen’s speech takes its most dramatic turn, as he argues that the Sydney Diocese’s public theology and mission is a matter of salvation, as secularism “fills the halls of hell.” The culture wars are thereby given a more urgent dimension, with the Archbishop invoking the threat of eternal damnation.

Excerpt XIII

***OUR MISSION***

*Do we care? In the face of this sort of world, what sort of diocese do we propose to be? Most of us would identify ourselves as classical Christians, most indeed as evangelical Christians; neither fundamentalist or liberal. The question for us is, are we merely an establishment church, or do we propose also to be a missionary church? Allow me to repeat what I said at the Deep Impact rally in August:*

*Church-going Anglicans in Sydney are about 1% of the population. We are becoming invisible. It is almost as unusual to have a friend who is a churchgoing Anglican, as it is to have one who is an*

*animal-keeper in the zoo. We are poised to become exotic. Most people will never meet or know one of us; it is hard for our children to have sufficient friends to support them. How will our neighbours hear the gospel from us?*

*If we wish to have a deep impact on our society - humanly speaking; we need to aim in the next decade to have at least 10% of the population who are committed, equipped and bold to speak in the name of Christ. Whether God will so bless us, is in his hands. But this ought to be our aim. There will need to be more of us, and the more of us will need to be more deeply committed, more constantly prayerful, more missionary-minded, more confident in God, better equipped, better educated in the Bible and more prepared to sacrifice time and money and worldly happiness than ever before.*

This section opens with the rhetorical question “do we care?” The question segues from the crisis of secularism established in the first third into outlining the diocesan leadership’s response—the mission statement and its call to action on the part of all Sydney Anglican congregations. The Archbishop’s reference to “Church-going Anglicans in Sydney [...] becoming invisible” draws upon the separatist/sectarian frame discussed earlier. While Sydney has a small number of Anglicans as a portion of overall population, to count only this number—absent the numbers of other denominations—is to consider the diocese’s ministry in isolation, and therefore, to only be concerned with the vitality of Sydney Anglicanism as a single denomination rather than the general wellbeing of Australian Christianity. Presenting the statistic in this way (“one per cent of the population”) also serves to further the impression of the diocese as a marginal, persecuted group (discussed above, in Excerpt IX). This helps the Archbishop convince his audience to support the mission statement by creating the impression there is a crisis that the Mission will address as a matter of urgency.

Jensen articulates the goals of the Mission here with a call to action on the part of his diocese, first uttered at the Deep Impact rally. He again uses second-person pronouns (“we” and “us”) to demonstrate kinship with his audience. As Jensen lists the demands that the Mission will surely place upon the church, he makes biblical and theological appeals (“more confidently prayerful”, “more confident in God”). This lends moral weight to the course of action he is advocating; a task described in terms of Christian fidelity. The closing sentence’s reference to sacrifice (of “time and money and worldly happiness”) is particularly important to the task of gaining consent from those members of Jensen’s Christian audience who may not yet be convinced. The notion of

self-sacrifice is one that holds particular weight in Christian theology, with Jesus' exhortation that his disciples deny themselves (Luke 9:23) and the theology of the Cross (Hall, 2003) standing out as two traditional examples. N.T Wright (1994) observed that in its contemporary use, "sacrifice has become a metaphor with a religious colouring, and has been used to back up all sorts of appeals: to the young, that they should go off and fight wars wished upon them by the old; to women that they should 'sacrifice' themselves for the sake of their husband or children; to Christian workers, who are asked to 'sacrifice'—i.e. to accept a ridiculously low salary—because ordinary churchgoers don't want to give realistically towards their support. We have, in short, become squeamish about real sacrifices, and manipulative about metaphorical ones" (4). Jensen's appeal to this notion of sacrifice therefore serves to legitimate an ambitious scheme that will obviously place a heavy tax upon church resources.

Excerpt XIV

*I do not believe that I have been brought to this position of Archbishop in order to acquiesce silently in the passing away of Anglican Christianity in this region. I cannot look out in satisfaction and complacency at our past achievements. I cannot compare us with Christians elsewhere and draw comfort. I can say that, given the events of the last decades, we have done well in various ways. I can say that there are elements of the present situation which give us cause for hope and joy. I can say that all is not lost. But we need to recognise that we live in days of crisis, in days of decision, for our Anglican Church in Australia and for the evangelical movement in this land and for our diocese in particular. Choices lie before us - difficult choices. It is no accident that Bishop Spong says that Australia is his most fruitful mission field, that he expects his sort of Christianity to flourish here. He is right. Crowds flock to hear him and some churches even support him—they are like turkeys voting for an early Christmas.*

Jensen again draws on the theme of a church in crisis introduced in Excerpt XIII. Contrasting the repeated use of the word 'cannot' with the word 'can' creates the impression that this crisis, while serious, may be averted. He draws upon language that is apocalyptic in tone to underscore this, referring to "days of crisis" and "days of decision."

Jensen furthers his 'othering' of Spong here, rhetorically positioning the former

Bishop of Newark as a rival for hearts and minds whose own “mission field” is “flourish[ing].” Jensen responds to this assertion with the short sentence “he is right.” His clipped syntax creates impact as he uncharacteristically agrees with Spong. He lowers his tone, drawing on a colloquialism—“like turkeys voting for an early Christmas”—to describe the churches who support Spong’s ministry. Needless to say this description serves to marginalise Spong and his supporters as among those who brought about the church’s current crisis.

Excerpt XV

*That is the point at which we have arrived. And that is why I have proposed that we make this the mission statement for our diocese and to follow out the consequences by acting on it:*

*To glorify God by proclaiming our Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ in prayerful dependence on the Holy Spirit, so that everyone will hear his call to repent, trust and serve Christ in love, and be established in the fellowship of his disciples while they await his return.*

*Why have this statement? It aims to bring God’s word home to us just as and where we are. It is not intended to be a complete statement of theology; it is trinitarian in shape, but there is nothing explicit here about sin, atonement, or the scriptures, for example. It is not intended to include or justify all the valid activities which we may engage in on behalf of Christ. At another time it is possible that a different mission statement may emerge. It is not intended to be compulsory. In no way will parishes or individuals be forced to subscribe to it. I do not mind much that some will look for a more pithy and memorable statement. I am more concerned that it be recognised for what I trust it is, a prophetic application of God’s word to our present situation. And, if it is the application of God’s word, it will persuade us to make decisions, show faith and enter commitments.*

Jensen introduces the mission statement for the Synod’s consideration here, which he will discuss and expand upon in this second portion of the address (from Excerpt XV to Excerpt XXIV). As stated repeatedly throughout this CDA, one of the main purposes of the presidential address is for Jensen to persuade the Synod to approve the mission statement. These sections are the main portion of the speech where Jensen achieves this particular rhetorical aim.

The mission statement, introduced here by the Archbishop, is necessarily short, at only 66 words. As is often the case with mission statements, it makes use of strategic

ambiguity, not naming any one specific activity so that a wider group of an organisation's members are included (Ryder, 2010: 14).<sup>29</sup> The statement also makes no mention of the church's works for social justice, a noteworthy omission based on a certain understanding of the church's missional priorities (see commentary below Excerpts XVI and XIX).

After introducing the statement, Jensen delivers six disclaimers to address any questions his audience might have about its shape and wording.

Excerpt XVI

*What do I mean by the claim that the mission statement is the application of God's word to our situation? It means this. We are not content to be a hobby organisation; we believe that we have a message of salvation for the world; we are bound to accept the immense challenge to share the knowledge of God. Let me now explain why I think that this is God's challenge for us at this time. In brief, I believe it is, because what I have said is so firmly rooted in scripture.*

*It is precisely from within the missionary situation of his own time that the Apostle Paul speaks to us about this: So whatever you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews or Greeks or the church of God; even as I try to please everyone in every way, For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved. Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ (1 Cor 10:31–11:1). What is our purpose in life? More specifically what is the purpose of our behaviour towards others? Do it all for the glory of God.*

*Even our love for others comes second to our love for God. We who belong to him, wish to see him receive the glory that is due to him; we wish his reputation to be high over all; we wish that every knee would bend before him; we wish that the songs of all the redeemed would echo his praise; we pray that God would hallow his own name. The glory of God and the salvation of his people are united. Salvation reveals his glory and creates a people who glorify him as their goal in life. Ezekiel teaches us that the hallowing of God's name is something which he himself does as he saves his disobedient people and restores them (Ez 36:16-23). In the end, human beings are mere creatures, and our greatest good is found when God is glorified, when he is given his rightful place as the centre of all things. That is the goal of creation; the moment is going to arrive when the Son himself will be made subject to him so that God may be all in all (1 Cor 15:28).*

In this section, Jensen uses two rhetorical questions to impart his formulaic theological points. In the first of these Jensen asks (himself), “What do I mean by the claim that the mission statement is the application of God’s word to our situation?” The Archbishop responds to his own question with the short, firm answer, “It means this.” He goes on to argue that his diocese, “not content to be a hobby organisation” has “a message of salvation for the world.” Jensen’s claim, “what I have said is so firmly rooted in scripture” lends the Archbishop and the mission statement the legitimacy of biblical authority. As is explored in more detail in Excerpt XVIII, for Jensen’s Sydney Anglican audience, this appeal holds particular power.

Jensen’s rhetorical question “What is our purpose in life?” is one of immense scope. It is fair to say that answering (or even merely exploring) this broad question is the task of all religions and spiritual systems. In order to narrow this scope Jensen adds the more closed question, “What is the purpose of our behaviour towards others?” This qualifier neatly sets up another theological formula that Jensen wishes to impart “Do it all for the love of God.” His claim that “even our love for others comes second to our love for God”, invokes a hierarchal understanding of how to prioritise life and ministry imperatives, and serves as justification for the mission statement’s lack of any reference to serving other people, or acting out of love for them.

Excerpt XVII

*To commit ourselves to the glory of God is an entirely fitting aim for human beings; but it is also a proper introduction for what follows. In fact, if you just wish to have as your mission statement to glorify God, all else will follow, for the salvation of the world is his glory. That is why Paul says in this very context, For I am not seeking my own good, but the good of many that they may be saved. And that is why the next words have to isolate the proclamation of the gospel as the way by which people are saved.*

*The scriptures emphasise the importance of the godly life in the process of proclaiming the gospel (e.g 1 Peter 3:2). Indeed that is Paul’s point in this very passage. But although the godly life adorns and commends the message, it does not take the place of the message. In God’s economy of salvation, it is the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ which is the saving instrument. It is the word, but not merely any word, or indeed any word about God: it is the word that Jesus Christ is Saviour and Lord: we preach Christ crucified to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Cor 1:22-23).*

Jensen essentially argues that the main purpose of the church is to save others through evangelism, with all church activities serving as a means to this end, what might be called “a proper introduction for what follows”. As was explored in the background section of this chapter, this understanding is consistent with the strand of Sydney Anglicanism that informed the constitution of RePA, whose members viewed anything that distracted from this priority as suspect (Mascord, 2012: 154).

Jensen goes on to further explore “God’s economy of salvation”, arguing that ascent to the propositional statement “that Jesus Christ is Saviour and Lord” is the “saving instrument.” This particular understanding of soteriology is largely informed by Knox’s theory of propositional revelation. According to this theory the writers of the Bible were inspired by the Holy Spirit to write the books and letters it would later contain, and the means of salvation involves understanding and responding to a series of scriptural propositions (Porter, 2006: 50) (that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the saviour of the world and the redeemer of sin).

Excerpt XVIII

*Now let me give two provisos in saying this. The first arises because I isolate the word of God as the special means of God’s saving work. I am not saying, that all of us are involved in proclaiming the word in the same way. We ought all to be prepared to “give a reason for the hope that you have” (1 Peter 3:15), but opportunities, gifts and training differ from person to person. In the body there are many gifts. Secondly, however, we all retain our responsibilities to support the proclamation of the word, and to give it the highest priority in our support. After all, the hallowing of God’s name is the first petition of the Lord’s prayer, and his name is hallowed in the salvation of his people. You do not have to be a missionary to be an extremely active supporter of missionaries.*

In this section Jensen outlines some caveats for his statements regarding the Mission. His explanation of the reason that informs the first, “[...] the word of God [is] the special means of God’s saving work”, reflects a conservative evangelical understanding of the authority of scripture. Namely that the Bible is the unique revealed word of God—a concept that is both complex and controversial. Jensen’s



description here—that the Bible is “isolated” as the means of special revelation and salvation—is, once again, reminiscent of Broughton Knox’s earlier-outlined theory of propositional revelation (Porter, 2006:50).

Jensen repeats the trope of hierarchical priorities with evangelism in the top strata. In this excerpt he directly argues that the diocese must maintain evangelism as “the highest priority in our support.” The Archbishop’s subsequent comment, “you don’t have to be a missionary to be an extremely active supporter of missionaries”, further isolates the role of missionary as being exceptional; although Jensen acknowledges that not all Sydney Anglicans have this particular vocation they are still obligated to meet their diocese’s top priority with their support.

Excerpt XIX

*When we see the mission statement and the goal together we may think that we are being invited to solve all the world’s problems with one answer and in our own strength. But God does his own far wider work in the world without our co-operation at all, and the gospel of Jesus does not need us in order to make progress. Immediately, therefore, the mission statement goes on to say that we are to proclaim the gospel of Jesus in prayerful dependence on the Holy Spirit. Salvation and the application of salvation to the human heart are the business of God; he graciously allows us to be involved, but he is the one who must do these things. All our efforts will be quite fruitless, without trust in God expressed especially in prayer. One of the immediate consequences of accepting this mission statement would be the notable multiplication of prayer for its fulfilment.*

*Paul told the people of Athens, God commands all people everywhere to repent (Acts 17:31; also Mk 1:14,15). The gospel is universal, it does not discriminate between races or language groups or any other human diversities. If we wish to be involved in God’s gospel ministry, we too need to be universal in our outlook and not restricted to people of our own kind, race or class. We cannot be satisfied with the penetration achieved by the gospel in this diocese. There are too few people; we are too restricted to the professional and middle class; we are too limited to European and English speaking tribes. A commitment by us to this mission is a commitment to all people that they will at least hear the gospel in its true form. The repentance that Paul and Jesus speak of first in these texts is the repentance of faith. That is, its first action is to put trust and confidence in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the one mediator between God and humankind.*

*One of the most important theological truths to get right is the connection between saving faith and obedience. We are not saved by good works, by obedience. But salvation leads to good works; faith is the mother of obedience. The rest of the mission statement tells us of the powerful effects of the gospel*

*of Jesus. By receiving him as Lord, we commit ourselves to walking with him by faith and in love. On hearing of the mission statement a number of people have expressed concern lest the good works that we do as individuals and in churches and organisations such as Anglicare and the Retirement Villages are omitted. Nothing can be further from the truth. We are to serve Christ in love; this means that we are to love our neighbours and to be involved in works of love in the community in which our lives are set. Indeed holy living itself attracts people to the Lord.*

*But the holiness is a fruit of the gospel, and if we fail to get the order right, we will confuse the means of salvation with its consequences. If we wish our lives to be productive with the good works of God, we must give the proclamation of the gospel a priority of place and a uniqueness of effect. That done, we must serve Christ in the community and in the home and in the church with all our hearts. Our goals as churches and Christians are multiple not single. If we fail to get this right our good works will be done for the wrong reason, they will be the wrong good works, and unregenerate people will be doing them. The very soul of our denomination is at stake in getting this matter right.*

Jensen continues his hierarchical prioritising of the church's imperatives here, with his most forceful argument yet that evangelism and salvation are central to the church's activities. The Archbishop departs somewhat from his former RePA allies with the communitarian appeal "we must serve Christ in the community." These words however are said to fit within the wider formula for the salvation of individuals, where the glory of God is the chief priority—as opposed to the doing of good for its own sake.

Jensen makes mention of the diocese's welfare work (through Anglicare and retirement villages) in order to reassure audience members who are concerned that the mission statement overlooks these activities. While Jensen claims, in a truncated sentence, that "nothing could be further from the truth", it appears that such concern was justified. As Porter observed, in 2005 Anglicare Sydney ran at a \$3 million deficit which led to a reduction in services, such as the hospital and prison chaplaincy budget (2006: 10–11). While the Archbishop argued that this was not the consequence of diocesan priorities, other commentators argued that the supremacy of the Mission had led to Anglicare's predicament (Porter, 2006: 11).

Jensen closes this section with the speech's broadest criticism of the wider Anglican Church by way of the urgent phrase, "*the very soul of our denomination is at stake in*

getting this matter right.” This use of soteriological metaphor casts Anglicanism as a church in danger, possibly of damnation. That Jensen includes this criticism of his own denomination in his first presidential address, a highly important speech widely disseminated through the diocese’s website, serves to highlight the sheer scale of the Anglican Church’s organisational division, with Sydney cast as those who are getting “this matter right”.

Excerpt XX

*The church is not incidental to salvation. God saves individuals, but he adds them to his people, and he often saves them in the midst of his people. We cannot be content to see individuals won to Christ without also seeing them established in the Christian fellowship. In the future, that fellowship may not look much like the standard Sunday church which we may be used to. Its timing, form, location, size and membership may be very different. But the fact of fellowship around the Lord Jesus Christ cannot be different; in particular, like him, we are looking for fellowships made up of disciples, of learners who seek to obey him and walk in love. I am saying that as a missionary strategy the mission statement is calling on us to multiply Christian fellowships, not to be content with a parish-based Anglicanism alone, but to insist on a spiritually based Anglicanism in which the reality of the church is more important than its outward shape. I am saying that the quality of our churches as nurturing communities must be strong if we are to survive and grow.*

*The fellowship of Christ’s disciples will be marked by faith and they will be marked by love. They will also be fellowships of hope. They will not be so caught up in this world as to forget the world to come and the coming Saviour. When Paul spoke of his early converts in Thessalonica, he praised them for their faith and for their love and then he refers to the fact that “you turned from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead; Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath; (1 Thess 1:9-10). This will be one of the chief ways in which these Anglican fellowships are going to differ from the world around, for the sake of the world around.*

Jensen begins here with the propositional statement “the church is not incidental to salvation”, another theological formula that serves as an introduction to his next theme; that of the future church and the need for Sydney to be prepared for the changes it will bring. Taken together, these two concepts work in tandem towards Jensen’s goal of persuading the Synod to approve the mission statement.

Jensen makes reference to Anglican fellowships not being so “caught up in the world as to forget the world to come and the coming Saviour.” This is an opaque contrast between the new churches that the diocese will plant as part of the mission, and the “modernised” “anaemic” Christianity that the Archbishop attacks elsewhere in the address. Such contrast furthers the already oft-mentioned trope of the Sydney Anglicans as a gathered people separate from the rest of the world (and in this case, much of the Australian church).

Excerpt XXI

*The coming wrath is a phrase that brings home to us the significance of the issues of which I am speaking. There is a day of judgement; there is eternal life and there is eternal condemnation; the issues of judgement are worked out in this life; there is a Saviour and his name is Jesus. That men and women are in need of salvation from the coming wrath; that this, indeed, is their most desperate need. These are so clearly, so plainly the teachings of the Bible that it is scarcely necessary to recite them. But what are we doing about them? I trust that all persons here have turned to Christ as their only hope of salvation from the coming wrath. I trust that this is your position as I speak to you. But if it is, what should you be prepared to do to forward the work of salvation for others?*

*I realise, of course, that in saying this I have come to one of the chief rocks of offence for the post-modern world: the fact that there is a coming wrath, a day of judgement. The compulsive relativism of our contemporary world cannot cope with this fixed and immovable future point, this moment of absolute truth, when the secrets of all hearts will be disclosed. And, unfortunately, this is precisely where the contemporary church has shown itself to be pitifully weak. It will not preach the coming wrath, and it will not announce Jesus as the one true Saviour of humanity.*

Jensen begins this section with a creedal statement that affirms doctrinal points such as the day of judgement, eternal life and eternal condemnation. Many of these points are based on a particular biblical interpretation that is central to Sydney Anglican discourse. For example, Jensen makes use of the contrast between “eternal life” and “eternal condemnation” two soteriological concepts that are the subject of debate amongst theologians. Jensen’s references to “eternal condemnation” and Christ as the “only hope of salvation” emphasise his diocese’s predominant, exclusivist view of salvation (whereby, salvation is essentially only available to those who make an explicit confession of faith in Jesus Christ (Migliore, 2004: 307). While this is a popular view, Jensen’s argument that it is “so plainly the teaching [...] of the Bible” is a more contentious point than this rhetorically self-sufficient and clinching

argument suggests. As Daniel Migliore wrote:

*There are biblical texts depicting a double end of the drama of salvation (e.g., Matt.10:28; 18:8-9; 25:31-46; Luke 16:19-31) and there are biblical texts suggesting a restoration or consummation of all things (e.g., Rom. 5:18-19; 1 Cor. 15:22; Col. 1:20; Eph. 1:10). What answer one gives to the question of universal salvation depends in large part on which of these two strands of the biblical witness receives priority in one's overall interpretation of the scriptural message (Migliore, 2004: 321).*

Jensen—along with the majority of his diocese—comes down on the “double end” strand, rather than that of universalism. In Excerpt XXI, however, the Archbishop presents this strand as being biblically normative. This is despite the fact that many biblical scholars do not hold this understanding, including theological heavyweight Karl Barth—described by Jensen in Excerpt III as “the great Swiss theologian”.<sup>30</sup> Jensen’s presentation of this exclusivist view of salvation rhetorically places the diocese as those responsible for imparting the gospel to others whose salvation depends upon it. While imparting the gospel is undoubtedly a priority of the church universal (Porter, 2006: 12), this rhetorical positioning arguably places the Sydney Diocese in a position of great power.

Excerpt XXII

*September 11th was one of those days when the world changed. We all knew that it was possible for wicked and desperate men to do fearful damage in the great cities of the world. We knew it, and yet the fact that no such thing had ever happened made us confident that no matter how desperate and wicked men are, they would not be party to such a slaughter of the innocents. Now we know better, and without wishing to be alarmist I have to say that if such a deed can be perpetrated, there is no reason whatever why far worse and more horrible things may not be done. Indeed the faces of the innocent in Afghanistan are beginning to haunt us also as terror begets terror. On that day, surely, postmodernism died and we had to readmit the words absolute evil to the language. In the face of realistic human fears, hope, the forgotten virtue, may be one of the great distinguishing marks of the Christian fellowships. But it won't be a hope of the kingdom of God on this earth; it will be a hope of the coming of Jesus, and of his capacity to save us from the wrath to come. And yet this hope will be particularly important for the quality of life here on earth.*

In this section of the speech, Jensen makes his most explicit reference to the past month's events of 11 September. His opening sentence "September 11<sup>th</sup> was one of those days *when the world changed*", makes use of what was, at the time, a common phrase used to measure the significance of the terrorist attack (Migliore, 2004: xi). Jensen makes use of several emotionally loaded adjectives ("wicked and desperate" "fearful damage" "the great cities") to summon a sense of terror befitting such an event. The agenda behind this reference to recent history becomes readily apparent when Jensen declares "on that day, surely, postmodernism died and we had to readmit the words absolute evil to the language." Amongst the different interpretations of the event vying for attention, Jensen adds 11 September as an apocalyptic event that marks the historical end of postmodernism. As is adumbrated in the analysis of Excerpt VIII, while 'postmodernism' describes a broad, diverse sphere of thought, Jensen uses the term as shorthand for 'relativism.' Jensen is, therefore, using the occasion of his address to the Synod to intensify his role in the culture wars, as well as to further the emphasis on absolute truth that marks his signature rhetoric.

Excerpt XXIII

*Let me apply this to a less apocalyptic, more mundane contemporary matter. In a short time we will be voting at a federal election. You may think that with my strong emphasis on the future matters like elections should be of little consequence to us. On the contrary, it is our gospel of the coming wrath*

*which makes us intensely interested in all that goes on in our world, not least the issue of government. Our judgment in elections will be of significance in the final judgement. One of the elements of the political process which should especially concern us is the quality of candidates. I am told that there has been a very significant decline in the last thirty years in the number of people offering for pre-selection in all the major parties. The numbers have been slashed; the question now is: are there sufficient people of quality offering?*

*I fear that a major factor in all this is the contempt which is expressed about politicians almost universally in the community. Who would want to join the ranks of such a despised cohort? Cynicism has swallowed up intelligent political commentary; it is in danger of making the good work that our political leaders do, invisible. There is not much encouragement to be a committed servant of the people; on the contrary we have a tendency to reward politicians and parties who reflect some of the worst features of our national life, not least our selfishness and lack of generosity to those in need. I believe that the bi-partisan policy on refugees is not something of which we should be proud.*

*As those committed to classic Christianity we ought to think very hard about this. In the first place, our biblical view of sin should leave us with no illusions: political - and church - leaders are sinful and will often let us down. Secondly, we are right to ask for the highest standards of probity and integrity in public life and be disappointed when less is offered. Thirdly, we are also able to point the way to repentance and forgiveness through Jesus; we know what it is to admit a mistake or failing and then take appropriate action. When a political leader would admit to a false judgment or even an unworthy action, he or she is rarely forgiven. No wonder they are so inflexible and combative in public; how different things could be. Would we forgive a political leader who said, for example, "My policy on tax, on education, on refugees is wrong and I am going to change it." In other words, the gospel of judgement is sharply relevant to key issues of political and community life.*

Jensen's short statement "I believe the bi-partisan policy on refugees is not something of which we should be proud" serves to challenge the dominant Australian political discourse surrounding Asylum seekers. This expression of concern for the human rights of refugees has been made by all of Australia's mainline churches since the 1992 introduction of mandatory detention of asylum seekers arriving by boat.<sup>31</sup> This reference also has a unique currency for Jensen's audience. As the Archbishop says in this excerpt, they will soon be voting in the 2001 Australian Federal election, a poll dominated by the Howard Liberal Government's August refusal of asylum to 438 rescued refugees upon the MV Tampa. Jensen refers to the event to build his argument that the "gospel of judgement is sharply relevant to key issues of political

and community life.” The reference also serves as an example of the Archbishop’s penchant for using current events as an opportunity to make a wider theological point.

Excerpt XXIV

*That is the mission statement and something of its biblical basis and the reach of its application. It calls us to evangelistic mission as our chief priority. But it does not stop there; for evangelism must lead to conversion of life and heart, and to the life of justice and love in the community, and to the creation of rich and nurturing Christian fellowships, to strong churches. And this is not to pull us out of the community; on the contrary, voluntary associations such as ours are vital to the good health of the Australian community. For example, people whose lives are nourished by God in these fellowships should offer for community leadership.*

This excerpt contains Jensen’s most overt statement that evangelism is the main priority of his diocese. While he insists that “it does not stop there” and that the church rightly participates in “the life of justice and love in the community”, as all of this is said to logically flow from evangelism and conversion, this is another example of hierarchical prioritising (evident in Excerpts XVI, XVII and XVIII). Jensen argues, “[V]oluntary associations such as ours are vital to the good health of the Australian community.” As is explored in Chapter Four, this communitarian concern for the health of civil society is a significant part of the Archbishop’s worldview. Jensen further expounded upon this during his episcopate, particularly when expressing concern over the Howard Liberal Government’s Work Choices legislation. West described this when he wrote “Jensen [...] [harks] back to an earlier Australia. His social conservatism favours a society in which mothers do not have to work; his communitarianism prefers an Australia where a father can take his family to a union picnic day” (West, 2005).

Excerpt XXV

*Am I advancing novel ideas in saying all this? At the end of this year we farewell three of our most respected senior brothers, Ray Smith and Paul Barnett from their role as regional bishops, and Peter Smart as Registrar. There have been and will be other occasions in which more will be said by way of thanks for their service. Suffice to say that all of them lay down their tasks with our esteem and deep*



*gratitude. As you know I am delighted that Glenn Davies, Peter Tasker and Philip Selden have agreed to succeed them. But, despite any differences in gifts and personalities between those who retire and those who succeed, there is no difference in commitment to this mission. They exemplify it in their lives. Furthermore, Ray and Paul were part of the committee that laboured hard to produce the mission statement and the document on strategic spending, and Peter and Glenn are members of the Standing Committee who present it to you for your consideration. What a great tradition we are able to unfold in this succession. I praise God for his provision!*

Jensen begins this section of the speech with another rhetorical question; this time to affirm that he is not advancing any novel ideas but rather matters of orthodox theology. He moves on to the procedural matter of bidding farewell to outgoing diocese leaders, who he describes using the complementary adjectival pre-modifiers “respected” and “senior.” The prelate praises these men as having had exemplary commitment to the church’s mission. He reminds his Synod audience that these outgoing leaders and their replacements worked on the Mission statement, and the accompanying financial strategy. Taken together, these elements serve to reinforce the notion that those who have worked on the statement are paragons of extemporary church service and, on a sub-textual level, those assembled at Synod should honour this service by supporting his plans. With his exclamation “What a great tradition we are able to unfold in this success”, Jensen again returns to the conservative emphasis on continuity and to his trope regarding succession and inherited traditions, first established in Excerpt V.

Excerpt XXVI

### ***OUR RESOLVE***

*Which leads us to this Synod.*

*The Sydney Synod is first and foremost an assembly of brothers and sisters who represent the churches (and to a much lesser extent, the organisations) of our diocese. The churches are the true heart of the diocese. Our business is to work harmoniously together to foster the work of the gospel through the churches of our diocese. The work of God goes forward especially in the churches; the Diocesan structures, even the most important of them, exist to serve the churches, not the other way around. All the legislative and political work of this assembly is meant to serve the Lord Jesus Christ and his*

*people, not be an end in itself.*

*This means that the churches must not see themselves as small cogs in a giant machine; not as isolated and marginal gatherings forgotten by the centre; not as struggling but despised branches of a large corporation. Each church is at the centre; each church is where the action is. In all my extensive experience of this diocese, wherever I go I almost always find someone who has a gripe about their relation with the alleged centre, usually known as “they” or “them” or “The diocese.” Let me assure you that this includes the people in the alleged centre.*

*Let me exaggerate to make the point: all the organisations complain; all the committees complain; all the parishes complain; all the bishops complain about isolation; and you should hear the Archdeacons! Brothers and sisters, our true centre is in heaven; we march to the beat of His drum; Lithgow is just as close to the centre as St John’s Parramatta or St Andrew’s Cathedral or beautiful Ulladulla or the Archbishop. We must accept our local responsibilities, and in Synod work together for the glory of God and the good of all. Synod is not the coming together into the centre; it is the assembly of the congregations whose centre is the Lord Jesus Christ. Synod should be for us a joy as we work responsibly and in unity for the cause of the gospel through the churches in the diocese and far beyond.*

In this section’s final paragraph, Jensen names the boundaries of his diocese (“Lithgow [...] to [...] beautiful Ulladulla”) while building upon his concept of a decentralised diocese focused on local congregations; a concept that, as noted in the above background section, had its origins in Broughton Knox’s theology. Jensen’s comment in the final sentence of this particular extract “we work [...] for the cause of the gospel through the churches in the diocese and far beyond” is a more heavily loaded statement than it may appear. Sydney Diocese’s particular conservative evangelical understanding of what constitutes the “gospel” (in ancient Greek: *evangelion*, or good news) of Jesus Christ is a particular understanding that differs to other versions (such as the social gospel of Latin American liberation theology). Jensen’s call to “unity for the cause” of this gospel is therefore a call upon those present at Synod to unite behind the spreading of Sydney’s theology “far beyond” the boundaries of Lithgow and Ulladulla. Thus the Archbishop is making an opaque reference to the planting of churches outside Sydney to facilitate this spreading of the diocese’s theological discourse. As noted in the Introduction chapter, this encroachment of church boundaries is a controversial practice that has raised the ire of Anglican churches already operating in these dioceses (Marr, 2008).

Excerpt XXVII

*You will notice some changes in the way we conduct business at this Synod. Not only are we meeting over two weekends, but in this Synod we are going to hear more from some local churches, their hopes and dreams; we are going to have slightly more time, I hope, for motions; we have taken steps to speed legislation and give Synod the in-principle debate, rather than have us all stuck discussing endless amendments; we have incorporated time for discussion and prayer with the people seated around you; missionary hour has been revamped and you will already have noticed that the venue of the Synod service has changed. In none of this have the rights to free speech and to amend legislation been curtailed.*

*But we do need a change of mood so that we can own together the business which is before us and see its relevance to the mission of the diocese. I hope that in the end it will be as natural to bring your Bible to Synod as it is to bring your seventh handbook. I hope that you will come to future Synods eager to hear how the churches are developing and how the mission is progressing; eager, in fact, to fellowship together.*

In this excerpt, Jensen outlines broad changes made to the structure and procedures of the Synod. In keeping with the broader themes of his address (and early episcopate), these changes are based around local congregations and the church's vision. Jensen assures the Synod that, despite the changes made, the "rights to free speech and to amend legislation" remain untouched. He does not substantiate this assertion with any evidence as to how the new structure preserves democracy.

Excerpt XXVIII

*We will be discussing all sorts of issues at this Synod; we will be voting in elections (perhaps the most important task of all); we will be hearing reports and praying; we have legislation before us; we must decide what to do about Gilbulla. In the end, however, it must be the mission statement and its implications which will dominate our thoughts. This Synod is the primary consultation about this call to mission. Our attitude to that is what this Synod will be known for. Let no one be deceived: it is a call for sacrifice, for change, for unremitting effort in dependence on God's Spirit. To plan for its fulfilment is going to require much work and hitherto undreamed of demands. The nature of ministry may change; episcopacy may change; parish structures may change; organisations may change; regionalism may change; it may be that we will need six regions rather than five, for example. If we are going to take the challenge of this mission statement seriously, we must be ready to commit*

*ourselves to it by this time next year.*

Jensen runs over the activities that the Synod will be undertaking. Included on this list is the legislative agenda, whereby he makes special mention of deciding “what to do about Gilbulla.” This is a reference to the proposed selling of one of the diocese’s conference centres. The Archbishop frames the mission statement as being an imperative for the diocese; it must be what dominates proceedings, and the participants’ thoughts. Once again drawing on the triadic structure for dramatic effect, he presents the statement as being “a call for sacrifice, for change, for unremitting effort in dependence on God’s Spirit.” The Archbishop repeats the phrase “may change” five times with reference to ministry, episcopacy, parish structures, organisations and regionalism (which involves the wider diocese structured as five or six smaller regions, overseen by assistant bishops). The repetition has dramatic effect and persuades his audience that the mission is a worthwhile endeavour of broad scope.

Excerpt XXIX

*The key question before us is this: How do we evangelise the area we know of as the Diocese of Sydney? You may be sure, by the way that we will not do it by neglecting our mission responsibilities in the rest of Australia and the world. But nor will it be done through uninterrupted drift. Let me make the following five observations.*

*First, the talk of 10% is a mission strategy. We must be clear that we are not talking of a 10% increase in our churches, but 10% of the 5,000,000 people who make up our region. Humanly speaking, our aim is to reach the important base point of 10%, so that we may have some hope of effectively evangelising the other 90%. It is our necessary first stage. Please note that I am not endorsing big churches as our strategy here. Big churches have their place; so, too, do small churches. We just need lots more of both.*

Here, Jensen frames the mission as being the answer to “the key question before us.” As discussed, Jensen’s concern is with how Sydney Diocese evangelises the geographic area that it takes in: a mission strategy with ten per cent of Sydney as the target, with a view to evangelising the remainder. One potential implication is that

this would involve Sydney Diocese targeting people already involved with other denominations, perhaps with the intent of bringing them into the Anglican fold. While Jensen said on other occasions that the Mission was also intended to grow ‘Bible based’ churches of other denominations, whether or not he is referring to only the Anglican church counting towards the target is not clarified in this portion of the address. Furthermore, as stated in *Graving Another Testament’s* Introduction, the Archbishop did not consider the Catholic, Uniting, or any of the Orthodox churches as being ‘Bible based’ (Porter, 2006: 11).

Excerpt XXX

*Second, we need to acknowledge at once that the task is absolutely daunting. As you look out over your part of the work it may be hard to imagine an increase of 10% in those going to church let alone 10% of the whole area. You may feel that you are already working to your limit; indeed you may be exhausted. But that is why this needs to be an aim of the diocese as a whole. That is why we need to gear up all our resources to the mission; that is why we need to come to encourage innovation and permission giving. Sydney cannot be reached merely by the parochial system; the threefold ministry on its own is not enough; the world has utterly changed. History tells us that our nineteenth century Sydney Anglicans were far more innovative, far more daring than we are. We are stultified; we are jealous of one another; we are spiritually arthritic and emotionally crotchety. We need to think, what would a pioneer missionary do here? We have to applaud those who have the new ideas of parishes without property, of church planting in schools, of specialist ministries to professional or hobby groups, of church during the week, of camping, Internet and TAFE ministries, of crossing the cultures. In short, we need to encourage innovation and adjust our approach to money. Tonight we are going to be debating the document Strategy Driven Spending. It is the result of hard work by the Diocesan Executive Board, and was virtually all complete before I joined it in July. My own chief contribution was the mission statement, and various editorial changes. I would not describe it as a radical proposal, but it is a significant one. It is going to invite us as a Synod to commit ourselves to preparing our next budget in a principled way and the principles are going to be those enshrined in this mission statement. In effect, it gives us the next year to analyse, to consult, to plan, to pray before we come back to Synod and decide not merely on the budget, but on the mission. I am proposing that at the Synod next year we deliberate on both these connected issues. Next year is when we enter the race and respond to the starter’s gun - or we decide that this is not the race we want to enter.*

Jensen’s reference to the church’s history, and the “nineteenth century Sydney Anglicans”, who were “far more innovative” and “daring”, is an example of a

harkening back to an earlier period that serves as a blueprint for the present, which is a common trope of conservative discourses. Another example of this conservative emphasis on the past from Jensen's own rhetoric is his 2000 speech to the Anglican Church League entitled 'Build on the past' (Porter, 2006: 173). This reference to a shared heritage aids the Archbishop in establishing a rapport between his Synod audience and himself. It also establishes a reference point for the present challenge that the church faces in evangelising Sydney, if not a strategic plan. In order to create the impression that the diocese has worsened and to further establish his theme of crisis, Jensen describes the church using a pair of 'ageing' metaphors; "spiritually arthritic" and "emotionally crotchety." The Archbishop attenuates this criticism with the first person pronoun "we", which signifies that he includes himself in this description.

Excerpt XXXI

*Frankly, after such a process of consultation we may decide not to get involved as a diocese, not to accept the budget, not to agree to such goals. That is permissible; it may be wisdom. But passing the motion tonight commits us to real consultation, with real decision in view. I am not talking about an endless inconclusive process. To that end, I am going to suggest to the Standing Committee that it renames the Diocesan Executive Board something like the Diocesan Mission Board and tells it to get on with the job of planning. For my part, if you pass the resolution tonight, consultation, prayer, analysis and planning will dominate my own life for the next twelve months to start with. But I will not give up sharing the gospel, no matter how busy we become.*

Jensen furthers the impetus for the Synod to approve the mission statement. He does this by subtly undermining opposition to this motion. The Archbishop points out that voting down the motion "may be wisdom" (emphasis added). This indecisive term does not grant this course of action any authority. By contrast, Jensen's next sentence underscores the decisive nature of commitment to the mission (an agenda that does not feature "an endless inconclusive process" but is focused on "real consultation" and "real decision"). This decisive commitment works as a direct response to the "days of crisis/days of decision" theme developed by Jensen himself earlier in the speech. The Archbishop promises to recommend a new name for the Diocesan Executive Board, one that figuratively and literally puts the Mission at the centre.

Finally, he punctuates his commitment to action with a vow that he will “not give up sharing the gospel”, a phrase that—as established in the analysis of Excerpt XXVI—holds a particular moral authority within Sydney Anglican discourse.

Excerpt XXXII

*Fourth, I would like to introduce you to the activity of mission planning and ask you to practise it here and now. The Diocesan Executive Board endorsed the mission statement. I am glad to say that the members instantly saw the implications and began to ask themselves what would happen if we took this seriously. They began to plan for mission before my very eyes. Let me share some of those initial thoughts; they have no special status. I am not announcing new policies or initiatives. However, as we began our analysis, three necessary elements of mission planning became clear. We must:*

*Look at the end-point*

*If we did see very significant increase in numbers of people, what changes would we need to make in order to cope? How many ministers? How many in training? How many buildings? How many regions? What would happen to Synod? What about Diocesan services?*

*Look at the process*

*In the first place we are going to have to consult our people, motivate and train them. What steps need to be taken now to accomplish this? Who is going to do this? What about the organisations? We began to look at some tough propositions; for example For the mission to succeed it will have to become the all consuming feature of diocesan life involving a top down change in diocesan organisation as each relevant part reviews and adjusts to fit into the mission strategy. We began to isolate six phases that need to be passed through by this time next year.*

Here, Jensen turns to the theme of mission planning, and signals to his audience that he wants them to get involved as participants in this activity. The emphasis on the present in the words “here and now” provokes a sense of urgency to the activity, a response the Archbishop has carefully cultivated throughout the presidential address (particularly in Excerpt XIV’s reference to “days of crisis” and “days of decision”). Again, he singles out individuals for praise, with the Diocesan Executive Board described as exemplary for their efforts in swiftly endorsing the mission statement. Jensen evokes a sense of wonder when he uses the phrase “before my very eyes” to describe the board engaged in the exciting work of mission planning.

Excerpt XXXIII

*Look to the strategies*

*Here is the making of a list (may I stress again that this list has no status; it serves us here as a way of getting you involved in mission planning):*

*We intend to multiply congregations, not merely grow big churches.*

*Therefore...*

*We intend to encourage specialist churches, not merely concentrate on generalist ones.*

*Therefore...*

*We intend to make church attendance consistent and faithful, not episodic and uncommitted.*

*Therefore...*

*We intend to recruit and train as many as possible skilled persons for mission and ministry and not wait passively for candidates to identify themselves.*

*Therefore...*

*We intend to put in place spiritual, legal and theological foundations so the new believers will be secure and not allow the diocese to lose its way.*

In coming to the third element of missionary planning, Jensen supplies his audience with a list of priorities. The Archbishop once more reassures his audience that the list, much like the three elements of mission planning announced above in XXXII, has “no special status.” In explaining the reason for the list, Jensen shifts his pronoun use from first person to second person; “[M]ay *I* (first person) stress again that this list has no status; it serves *us* (first person) here as a way of getting *you* (second person) involved in mission planning.” Structuring the sentence in this way makes use of contrast, and makes Jensen’s Synod audience feel they are involved in the mission (that they are part of the collective “us”), and have their own part to play as individual stakeholders (the singular “you”). This again works towards Jensen’s goal of persuading any undecided members of his diocese to support the mission proposal.

The last point on the list is a threefold concern for the laying of “spiritual, legal and theological foundations” in order for “new members to be secure and not allow the



diocese to lose its way.” Such concern over whether or not the diocese might “lose its way” presents Sydney’s spiritual, legal and theological identity as something that needs to be preserved. This is perhaps best understood within the context of Sydney Diocese looking to retain its particular conservative evangelical character, over and against the theology and ecclesiology of other Anglicans.

Excerpt XXXIV

*But you do not have to wait for me or depend upon the mythical centre for direction. Can I challenge you as representatives of our churches and organisations to set to work at once? Here are some pointers: have you given up on Sunday evenings? Then the Sunday morning church has taken a step towards extinction within ten years. Why not at least meet with two or three for prayer? Start something at five o’clock. Can you tithe your membership and send at least ten per cent in for training? What about training of the congregation in evangelism? Can everyone handle What is a Christian? Or Two Ways to Live? Is there any adult education in your church? Can you plant a new church? Can ministers improve our preaching? Can we at least make sure that our churches are physically and relationally inviting and friendly places? Have a stock-take and get ready for mission. I was delighted recently to discover that the Western Regional Council has already produced strategies to this end.*

Jensen asks another rhetorical question, this time an instantaneous call to action for his churches to begin bold new ministries. In the list of “pointers” that he urges churches to take up he makes reference to two popular tracts. The second of these is *Two Ways To Live*. As noted in Chapter Four, it is a presentation of the Penal Substitutionary model of the Atonement to which the diocese’s conservative evangelicals subscribe. Jensen’s inclusion of *Two Ways To Live* in the presidential address serves to exemplify the ‘Gospel’ that the incoming Archbishop desires his flock to be commending to Sydney. It also demonstrates the tract’s cachet, and the role of Substitutionary Atonement theory, within Sydney Anglican discourse. Finally, Jensen describes the Western Regional Council as partially fulfilling the requirements that he has outlined. This pointing to an exemplary body is the kind of singling out for praise that Jensen also uses in Excerpt XXV (where he praises outgoing church leaders).

Excerpt XXXV

*I believe that two of the principled stands of this Synod in previous years are going to make much sense as we mission together if that is what we decide to do. The first is our belief that the ministry of women does not include the ministry of eldership of the congregations. Here is a point at which as a whole we have deliberately but painfully resisted the call of many brothers and sisters whom we respect and admire, but also the call of the community in which we live. We have all begun to see that what is at stake here is far more than proper employment practices. We have been forced to discuss the nature of God and the whole matter of the relationship between men and women. In doing so I think that our position has been biblically and theologically vindicated. It is my conviction and I know that in saying this I differ from many whom I respect highly, that we have been called upon in our time to bear witness to the need for men and women to have overlapping but different roles in home and church, for the sake of the good health of families. I think that the ministry of women has been aided by the stand we have taken; certainly there is a gratifying and significant increase in the number of women entering and involved in the ministry of the word. I believe that the day will come when the community itself will recognise that we have stood for principles of high importance for the good of all. I believe, furthermore, that for this mission to achieve its goal, godly women are going to be truly involved at the cutting edge.*

Jensen turns to the role of women within the Sydney Diocese; one that prevents them from preaching to mixed assemblies. Jensen's description of this as being a "principled stand" emphasises continuity, thereby granting this position the legitimacy of church tradition. Furthermore, the argument that this stance is one that "will make sense" is an appeal to rationality and a call for the Synod audience to continue to place their trust in this direction.

Jensen's argument that women and men "have overlapping but different roles in home and church" draws upon a common trope of Sydney Anglican discourse adumbrated earlier in this thesis; that men and women are "equal but different." This understanding that men and women occupy different spheres rests on a binary understanding of gender and has its theological underpinning in the theory known as complementarianism. Prominent conservative theologians, such as Mark Driscoll and John Piper, have championed this understanding through their work. Against the arguments of Christian feminists, complementarianism holds that men and women are equal in human value, but created for different roles, with men carrying leadership responsibilities and women support roles. Complementarianism is a popular doctrine

within Sydney and likeminded dioceses and features in the rhetoric of anti-women's ordination groups such as Equal But Different. According to Giles, Sydney Diocese's use of 'equality' language is deceptive. Giles wrote, "if women are permanently subordinated in role and their subordinate role can never change then they are the subordinated sex" (Giles, 2002, cited in Porter, 2006: 91).

The concept of complementarianism, and its role as a trope within Sydney Anglican discourse was previously explored in Chapter Three. As was discussed in that chapter, complementarian rhetoric draws on the terminology of equality to grant legitimacy and goodwill to an arguably unequal relationship between men and women. Jensen grants this doctrine further moral legitimacy in this section of the speech when he describes it as the subject of biblical and theological mandate. By using the evangelistic verb "bear witness" to describe his diocese's proclamation of this doctrine, Jensen depicts it as an integral part of the Mission. Furthermore, his argument that the proper practice of gender roles is a matter of the "health of families" grants moral impetus to the ongoing exclusion of women from "eldership". He claims the diocese has been rewarded for this stance, with more women joining those ministries for which they are eligible.

None of this analysis is intended to suggest that Peter Jensen is personally sexist. As Porter indicated in an interview conducted for this thesis, there is every indication that he is in every way respectful of, and loving towards, his wife (M. Porter, personal communication, 5 January 2013). Nonetheless, the fact that the issue of women's leadership is mentioned in his first major public speech as Archbishop signifies that the issue is one of high priority. It indicates that, for the duration of his episcopate, the women of his diocese will not be ordained to ministries where they might preach to mixed audiences.

*Excerpt XXXVI*

*The second is the commitment of this Synod to lay administration. I have been astonished at the suggestions that have been made in various quarters that we wish to adopt this course as a sort of adolescent pay back aimed at the National Church for ordaining women. We have been talking about this for over twenty years. The theology of lay administration is linked to lay ministry and especially*

*lay preaching, and flows naturally and properly from the theology of the Bible and our reformed heritage as it applies to the contemporary world. But more than that. The theological importance of the congregation and its significance as an agent for mission also calls for this development. In this diocese we expect lay people to minister and to offer spiritual leadership in the congregation. It is strange not to allow for this ministry in an ordered way. Other dioceses have developed novelties such as local priests and extended communion to help with ministry. Lay administration, should it be legal, would be a contribution to the common task of bringing the gospel to Australia.*

Jensen expounds upon another “principled stand”—the diocese’s commitment to lay administration (also known as lay presidency), a topic to be discussed during the Synod meeting he is presiding over. Responding to, and anticipating resistance to non-ordained congregants administering Holy Communion, the prelate draws upon rhetorical techniques common to his broader discursive repertoire. The first of these is a straw man argument: Jensen does not name those who argue that lay administration serves a political purpose; they are merely described as being “in various quarters.” He presents their argument as being that Sydney Diocese are engaging in an “adolescent pay back at the National Church for ordaining women”, which is an exaggeration of the argument likely to be put forward. Second, Jensen makes conservative appeals to continuity ironically enough to advocate a radical new church policy. Lay administration, he argues, is consistent with existing ecclesiology (“...lay administration is linked with lay ministry and especially lay preaching”), scripture (it “flows naturally and properly from the theology of the Bible”, a point not reinforced here with any quoting of scripture), and longevity (“we have been talking about this for over twenty years”). Third, Jensen again speaks in separatist “us and them” terms, as he describes “Other dioceses” that are not named, developing “novelties such as local priests.” Finally, Jensen speaks using carefully constructed clauses so as to avoid contravening Anglican Church law (“lay administration, should it be legal [...]”). In Jensen’s broader rhetoric this is perhaps best seen in Jensen’s avoidance of the term “split” to describe Sydney’s relationship with the Global Anglican Communion as this lawfully involves leaving church property behind (Marr, 2008). This section of the address is carefully layered to persuade a largely conservative evangelical audience to acquiesce to a controversial policy that, if instated, would serve to further the theological gulf between Sydney and the rest of the National

Church.

Excerpt XXXVII

*In 1959, the churches responded magnificently to the challenge of the city-wide Billy Graham Crusade, with incalculable results for good. I am putting before you something as momentous; but the days have changed and we are not now thinking merely of a month, but of a decade. This is the first opportunity I have had to face the Synod which elected me as the Archbishop of this diocese. I thank you with all my heart for the honour you have done me. I take it that it was not in your minds that I would be an idle or backward-looking prelate; or one content to enjoy the office with its powers and to pass them on untouched to my successor. I take it that you knew that you were appointing a minister of the word of God, who has given his life to that service and intends to continue in that way. You do not have to agree that this is the path we should take. That is why we have allowed time to talk and pray in the next year. I am offering to give you the best leadership I can in a mission as bold and yet as necessary as I can imagine. My question is, will you join me?*

Jensen begins this section of his address with a reference to the 1959 Graham Crusade, an event that was the locus of his coming to faith. Jensen's reference here is demonstrative of the effect it had on his ministry. The reference also serves to impart a sense of historical importance to the Mission, described outright as being "just as momentous." With the repetition of the phrase "I take it that" and the personal pronoun "you", Jensen reminds his audience that it was they, the members of the Synod, who chose him to lead the diocese. This serves to legitimate his agenda via the privilege of being the elected holder of a powerful office. The Archbishop closes with a final call upon the Synod to support the mission statement, signified by the invitation "will you join me?"

## **Conclusion**

This chapter's CDA has examined Archbishop Peter Jensen's presidential address to the Sydney Diocese's October 2001 Synod. From this detailed analysis a number of wider conclusions can be drawn. First, it must be acknowledged that Jensen's address

was incredibly successful, to draw on Chomsky and Herman's phraseology, manufacturing his diocese's consent (Chomsky and Herman, 1988, cited in Van Dijk, 1993: 255). Not only did the Synod approve the mission statement, arguably at significant cost to the church's fortunes but the controversial Archbishop was able to shore up his support. As Porter said in an interview, "Whereas [...] there was some opposition to him as Archbishop back [in 2001], I think that has been pushed [back] very far" (M. Porter, personal communication, 5 January 2013). Second, on a semantic level, it has been demonstrated that Jensen draws on a large variety of subtle rhetorical techniques to achieve the above-noted success. Some of the more prominent of these include the Archbishop's use of present participles to give his speech a sense of energy and urgency (cf. Excerpt IX), the use of straw man arguments while presenting opposing viewpoints (evident in Excerpts X and XXXVII), and references to shared identity underscored by the use of first person pronouns (Excerpts IX, X, and XIII). Third, there are a number of ways the Archbishop draws on the tropes and frames of his diocese's discourse in order to establish himself as a leader worthy of the Synod's trust. These include references to Christian values such as self-sacrifice (Excerpt XIII), appeals to the authority of scripture in order to justify particular theological opinions and ecclesial agenda (XVI), and the complementarian framing of gender relations in Excerpt XXXV. Finally, as adumbrated in the CDA's introduction and explored throughout the analysis section itself, the speech may be understood as having a number of social implications. Chief among these is a particular sectarianism and weakening of ecumenism. Jensen's call to convert ten per cent of Sydney, so as to evangelise the other 90 per cent, his criticism of the wider Australian church, and his call for his church to work for the "cause of the gospel [...] far beyond" the diocese's boundaries, all ensure the address is one that works to foster deeper division between Sydney Anglicans, the National Anglican Church, and broader Australian Christianity (to say nothing of its potential impact upon interfaith relations and dialogue). The speech's other major social consequence lies in the Archbishop's section on the role of women in the diocese (cf. Extract XXXVI). As has already been discussed at some length, Jensen's use of 'equal but different' rhetoric here serves to legitimate the subservient role of women in both the church and the home.

Having now critically analysed the 2001 Synod address delivered only months after Jensen's election, *Graving Another Testament* now turns to the other end of its elected timeframe and the close of his time as Archbishop. Chapter Seven is devoted to Jensen's exit, his final Synod address, and early attempts to define his legacy.

## Chapter Seven: The Jensen Legacy

### **Introduction**

When this project was first proposed in 2010, Archbishop Peter Jensen's episcopate was well underway. As work on the thesis drew to a close, so too did Jensen's time as Archbishop. In a year that saw the departure of Pope Benedict, the retirement of Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, as well as the end of the political careers of Prime Ministers Julia Gillard and Kevin Rudd, the 2013 retirement of a Sydney Archbishop may have otherwise been overlooked. As was characteristic of his ministry however, Jensen's retirement was the catalyst for broad discussion. Commentators within and without his diocese contributed their views on what the Jensen episcopate had meant for Sydney Diocese—and for the future of its particular version of Anglicanism (Baird, 2013; Cummins, 2013; Porter, 2013). With this context in mind, *Graving Another Testament* turns now to Jensen's exit, and to assess his overall, lasting impact on Sydney Anglican discourse.

### **Synod 2012 and Jensen's final presidential address**

This exploration begins with October 2012 when Peter Jensen presided over his final Synod meeting as Archbishop of the Sydney Diocese of the Anglican Church. This included the task of commencing the annual meeting with his presidential address on 8 October. Given its status as Jensen's final major speech as Archbishop, the address is worth considering for its contributions to the outgoing prelate's oeuvre. This address marked the departing Archbishop coming full circle, as he focused on the same topic as his first address in 2001—namely, the diocese's evangelistic Mission, with its goal of attracting an ambitious ten per cent of Sydney to 'Bible-based' churches. As Jensen put it, "To this Mission and the future, I dedicate these last words" (AMS Staff, 2012). The Synod address served as Jensen's parting effort to provide a long-term vision for the diocese, well beyond the Mission's end date. One of the speech's main conceits revolved around the date of 2060 as a long-term focal point.



Despite the Mission's centrality, particularly early in Jensen's episcopacy, the program ultimately failed to attract the targeted ten per cent. The text of Jensen's final Synod Address sought to address and downplay this, with a positive focus on where the ambitious target had supposedly served to energise and focus church priorities. Directly mentioning the numerical target in his text, the Archbishop described it as a gift from God:

*The ten per cent has been a blessing: we are constantly reminded to pray, because only The Lord can move like that; He has kept before us the big goal of reaching the whole population; He has changed our mind-set about evangelism and church ministry. He has yet to give us ten per cent of the population, but remarkably, in contrast with voluntary organisations in general, we have experienced numerical growth. How has The Lord blessed us? I think of our four policies, to preach and pray, to plan and penetrate, to multiply and train, to reform, I see significant progress on all fronts (AMS Staff, 2012).*

In much the same manner as his 2009 Synod address regarding the parlous state of the diocese's finances, Jensen attributed a number of outcomes to God rather than his own management. Quite unlike that address, with its appeal to the "secret will" of God, Jensen's language was unambiguous in tone, with clear reference to what God had done. The outgoing Archbishop returned to using the triadic structure that was a key aspect to many of his other speeches. With the triple repetition of the phrase "He" serving to reinforce the impression he wished to create in his audience. The Mission was successful through the grace of God, despite the diocese missing its target. The outgoing Archbishop went further by highlighting the supposedly encouraging growth figures that emerge from the period of his episcopacy:

*In a period when there were fewer nominal Anglicans and when the general tendency in various mainstream denominations has been a marked numerical decline, we have continued to grow. As far as we can tell the growth during the decade has been approximately 7.1 per cent from 75,000 to 80,000 regular attenders. The experts tell us that by comparison this is quite notable (AMS Staff, 2012).*

As well as obfuscating the failure to garner ten per cent of Sydney—as the Mission so boldly set out to achieve—this section of Jensen’s text contained some figures that serve to reinforce a controversial claim. As well as noting the difficulty that exists in obtaining reliable data for church attendance, it should also be observed that in the decade proceeding 2001, Sydney’s attendance rates “grew by 11 per cent” (Brighton, 2004, cited in Porter, 2006: 67). This calls into question as to whether or not the Mission saw an attendance increase in real terms. In another section of the speech that would become the focus of much secular media attention (Eastley, 2012, Maley, 2012), Jensen returned to the arena of social commentary, a familiar stomping ground for his episcopacy (as was explored in Chapter Six, his inaugural Synod address set the precedent with its concern for the health of voluntary associations, Australian democracy, and asylum seekers). This section of the speech read:

*The benefits of stable and loving family life are so huge that any society which does not aspire to it and enable it, is courting and experiencing the general judgement of God. But the prevailing philosophy of individualism has wrought its malign work on family as elsewhere. At the heart of family is marriage, understood as the union of two persons of the opposite sex from different families by way of promises of permanence and exclusion. If the promises reflect, as they do in the Book of Common Prayer, the differences in Man and Woman, as well as the equality, it is always to be understood that the headship of the man brings with it the awesome responsibility to nurture and cherish as Christ loved the Church (AMS Staff, 2012).*

In the same manner that Jensen’s first presidential address attacks the “invidious” force of secularism, the outgoing Archbishop here describes “the prevailing philosophy of individualism” in strong terms as a depersonalised, powerful force. Once again demonstrating his occasional propensity to make broad, unproven assertions, the claims that society “is courting and experiencing the general judgement of God” and that “individualism has wrought its malign work on family as elsewhere” are not corroborated by any reference to data or further reasoning.

Indeed, what the outgoing Archbishop meant exactly when he made these claims was not readily apparent, although the purpose of such wide assertions becomes clearer when considering the October 2013 context of Jensen's Synod address. It can be argued that Jensen's references to family, and more specifically to marriage, served a strategic purpose. Although not mentioned explicitly here, the diocese's new marriage vows—where women could opt to 'submit' to their husband—were subject to the approval of the Synod meeting that took place in the days following the address. Jensen's talk of properly "defined" marriage subtly garnered the support of his flock for the proposed vows, presented by the Archbishop as an antidote to the effects of 'malign' individualism on the family. Drawing on the complementarian frame explored in Chapter Three, Jensen reworked the popular phrase 'equal but different' when he argued that if wedding vows, "reflect [...] the differences in Man and Woman, as well as the equality". With the imbedded clause "as they do in the Book of Common Prayer" Jensen imbued his argument, and thereby, the proposed new vows, with the traditional legitimacy of a revered Anglican document more than four hundred years old. Marriage, defined by the outgoing Archbishop in precise terms as "the union of two persons from the opposite sex from different families" was presented as the core element of family life. As Chapter Three's exploration of gender issues demonstrated, this form of marriage, as privileged as it is by Sydney Diocese, is but one of several models of sexual relationship present in the Bible's sixty-six books. This is not to even mention the manner in which defining the heart of family as "marriage" serves to exclude other arrangements from the definition of the term. This, as Chapter Three explored, is consistent with a conservative evangelical discursive formation positioning the nuclear family as the ideal. According to the prominent theologian Stanley Hauerwas, such an approach "would have been a surprise to Jesus, a bachelor" (Todd, 1993).

Jensen's speech was once again delivered to a large audience. The Synod venue, Wesley Mission, was entirely full (AMS Staff, 2012). As quotes featured on the diocese website displayed, Jensen's oratory had the desired effect upon its audience. For example, the Reverend Neil Fitzpatrick, Rector for Jannali said, "I was very encouraged by Peter's talk [...] inspired to keep preaching the Gospel and very thankful for Peter's leadership over the last ten years" (sic) (AMS staff, 2012).

## Evaluating the Jensen legacy

As the generous assessment above shows, the departure of a well-known Archbishop is a fresh opportunity to analyse his legacy. Indeed, during the relatively short period leading into and following Jensen's August 2013 retirement, several key Sydney Diocese figures offered competing evaluations. To briefly consider a selection of these offerings reveals the sheer extent to which Jensen's twelve-year episcopacy divided the most informed observers. The Bishop for the region of South Sydney, Rob Forsyth, lost the 2001 election of a new Archbishop to Jensen. He said that he believed "the best man won" (Overington, 2012). According to Forsyth, "Some mistakes have probably been made along the way, but I'm glad [he was] there because he's been very strong, and you want that in the leader of your tribe" (Overington, 2012).

In an interview, Kirby gave Archbishop Jensen's episcopate a balanced evaluation befitting a former High Court Justice:

*I congratulated him for his service as Archbishop. I've since written him a letter congratulating him [...] [H]e has done what he thought was right. I admire that in him. I hope he might have a sneaking admiration for the fact that I have done what I think is right, because that's the essence of Protestantism [...] One thing will stand out, sadly. That is the poor investment decisions that were made in the Church, which is blessed with many advantages of property, but which, like many others, invested in imprudent investments. These have resulted in great losses. Even to the point that I understand that there is serious discussion about the sale of Bishops court, the traditional home of the Archbishop of Sydney. I'm sure that would be a great source of pain to Archbishop Jensen. Not because he has any pretensions. He is an unpretentious person. I think he's a humble person in his personal demeanour. But I think he would tell himself that he should have handed on the legacy with the same treasures that he received (M. Kirby, personal communication, 29 January 2013).*

A Sydney Anglican minister who wished to remain anonymous offered a far less sanguine analysis of Jensen's legacy:

*He's overseen an increasing monochromisation of the diocese. He's overseen a diminishing attendance at Moore College, church numbers have declined, college numbers have declined, the church's finances declined. He had a target of ten per cent of Sydney in Bible-believing churches. In real terms, he's seen next to no [...] increase in numbers. He's overseen the gradual, real decline of variety in the diocese. Under his [episcopate], people who described themselves as loyal opposition like John McIntyre [...] have left the diocese [...] I don't think, on any measure, he's been a success (Anonymous, personal communication, December 2012).*

Late in Jensen's episcopacy, Fairfax columnist and former Sydney Anglican Synod member Julia Baird offered another critical evaluation of the outgoing Archbishop's legacy. In a column called 'No place for spirited women' (2012a), Baird claimed that Jensen:

*has achieved a goal he reportedly spoke of privately at the beginning of his tenure: he would stamp out support for women preaching and leading in the diocese. Twenty years ago, not allowing women to preach in front of men was a minority position. Today, it is widespread (2012a).*

Jensen's handling of sexual abuse within the church was a far less contentious aspect of the former Archbishop's legacy. During his episcopate, Jensen conducted a series of meetings with survivors of sexual abuse, a group of people that the former Archbishop described as "some of the most courageous and extraordinary [...] in the world" (Powell, 2013). At the time of writing, the ongoing Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse had not implicated Sydney Diocese's

handling of the matter in any major way. Jensen's legacy stands out as enduringly positive in this regard.

## **The Future**

Following the election of Jensen's successor it seems likely that the former Archbishop's version of Sydney Anglican theology will remain entrenched. On Tuesday 6 August 2013, the diocese's synod elected Glenn Davies to succeed Jensen, a role into which he was officially inaugurated on 23 August 2013. Davies' ascent followed an election campaign where his supporters argued his virtues over and against the other forerunner for the role, Rick Smith. In one of his first interviews following the Synod vote, Davies told Channel 7 reporter Talitha Cummins that he was not dissimilar to his predecessor: "I can't imagine there'd be a lot of difference. We have the same theological framework, the same passion" (Cummins, 2013). This use of the repetitive adjective 'same' demonstrates how adherence to his predecessor's legacy is considered a reassuring quality in a new prelate. Archbishop Davies' other early public statements also apparently confirmed he would closely follow his predecessor's path. On the 1 September 2013 edition of *Q&A*, then-Prime Minister Kevin Rudd answered a question asked by a Brisbane pastor by declaring that he "simply [could] not agree" with the rejection of same-sex marriage on biblical grounds. Two days later, the new Archbishop issued Rudd with a riposte. In a statement posted on the diocese's website, Davies argued that the Prime Minister was "profoundly wrong in his understanding of the Bible" (Davies, 2013). In parlance familiar to any who have long followed Sydney Diocese's official statements regarding sexuality, the Archbishop wrote:

*To sanction same-sex 'marriage' is not the teaching of the Anglican Church in Australia, nor is it the teaching of the Bible. The Bible views marriage as an institution that God has created. Jesus brings clarity to the nature of marriage by saying that it is an exclusive relationship between a man and a woman, for life. Although there are many kinds of relationship in our society, to describe the relationship between two persons of the same sex as a marriage is contrary to the Bible's teaching (Davies, 2013).*

Some commentators believe the new prelate will be more moderate and tolerant of dissenting views than his predecessor despite their rhetorical similarities. According to this interpretation, Davies' episcopacy marks a significant change in leadership style. Fairfax columnist and former member of the Sydney Anglican synod, Julia Baird is among those who offer this interpretation. According to Baird:

*Davies is a true conservative, but is kindly, more tolerant of female preachers than his predecessor and, crucially, of dissent. People will not be blacklisted for airing different views. This could be the greatest sign in what promises to be a fascinating sea change in the Sydney Diocese (2013).*

Crucially, whether Archbishop Davies will be able to exert his predecessor's authority remains to be seen. Following the episcopacy of a prelate as significant to the hearts of Sydney Anglicans as Peter Jensen was always going to be a challenge for whoever took up the task. Writing in 2011 (before a clear contender had become known), Porter predicted that Jensen's successor might struggle to replace the popular former Archbishop:

*Whoever becomes the serious contenders to succeed Peter Jensen, they will not have the same cachet with the ruling elite of the diocese that made the Jensen ascendancy so inevitable [...] [W]hoever succeeds Jensen inevitably will not be so well known as Jensen was, nor so readily have a diocese happy to eat out of his hand (2011: 160-161).*

According to this logic, whether Davies garners his predecessor's form of charismatic authority and respect remains to be seen. Whether he will lead Sydney Diocese towards a more open and inclusive institution, similar to that envisioned in Mascord's sensational 2006 open letter to Synod Standing Committee, is also something commentators will be watching. As the new Archbishop put it himself when he was queried by Cummins as to whether he was "as outspoken" as Jensen he said, "we shall see" (Cummins, 2013).

## Conclusion

*Graving Another Testament* has critically analysed Sydney Anglican discourse. The focus of its analysis has included both Sydney Diocese in general and Archbishop Peter Jensen in particular. From the forgoing chapters, a number of broader conclusions have been reached.

As the Introduction outlined, Sydney Anglicans self-identify with the descriptor ‘evangelical’: a term that serves as a positive signifier of theological reliability. For example, in one of several writings defending Sydney Diocese, Michael Jensen argued that the diocese’s conservative standpoints are not limited to Sydney alone, but result from its “evangelical character” (Jensen, 2012). These uses of the term exist despite worldwide evangelicals being theologically diverse, as other conservative evangelicals—such as Kevin Giles—openly disagree with their Sydney counterparts. Sydney Anglican discourse has tropes and frames native to the diocese rather than evangelicalism more generally.

One particularly prominent trope of Sydney Anglican discourse is a tendency towards separatism. As was explored in Chapter One’s analysis of the early Mission plan, this was evident in efforts to grow what the diocese deemed “Bible-based” churches. This descriptor apparently precludes those who disagree with the Sydney Anglicans from basing their conclusions on faithful reflections on scripture.

Sydney Anglican discourse is formed and influenced by the diocese’s theological powerhouse, Moore College. As has been noted this was historically the case with influential Moore principal D.B Knox, whose opposition to the decriminalisation of homosexual acts appears to have influenced Archbishop Jensen’s rhetoric. Influential for its training of all diocese ministers, Moore has garnered a dual reputation for itself. While praised by graduates, critics such as former lecturer Keith Mascord allege the college is too narrow in the design of its curriculum and that it encourages students to accept and adopt a particular theological norm.

As was explored throughout this thesis, especially in Chapter Three, Sydney Anglican discourse invokes a binary understanding of gender. ‘Swaddled’ in the complementarian trope of ‘equal but different’—and reinforced by appeals to scripture and church tradition—



this depiction of “real men” and “real women” (Cummins, 2013) serves to legitimate the inequality that exists in certain facets of church life and marriage.

This construction of gender similarly marginalises gay and lesbian people as ‘others’ whose acting out of sexual desire is tantamount to rebellion against God’s designed roles for men and women. Once again, this ‘othering’ is granted credibility through conservative appeals to the longevity of tradition and a particular hermeneutic. With Archbishop Jensen’s leading role in the creation of the Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON) and his boycott of the 2008 Lambeth meeting, the sexuality debate grew in significance. Within Sydney Anglican discourse, the issue functions as a theological litmus test. This uncompromising approach exists despite the former Archbishop’s support for same sex couples’ access to superannuation, his expressions of pastoral concern for and friendships with gay people, and his long-term correspondence with Kirby.

Finally, large sections of Australia’s secular print and broadcast media challenged Archbishop Jensen’s hard line stances. This challenge was far from universal, with many politically conservative commentators defending the former Archbishop. However, those sections of Australia’s media that challenged Jensen’s viewpoints also ironically lent them credibility by covering them to an extent not afforded to other religious leaders.

As with any study, there are a number of avenues for potential research that this thesis has not explored. Chapter One’s exploration of Archbishop Jensen’s background is primarily concerned with the development of the former Archbishop’s theology and signature rhetoric, and is not by any means an exhaustive account. Jensen is a fascinating figure in Anglican Church history and a more exhaustive biography of the former Archbishop would be compelling. As *Graving Another Testament* focuses on the discursive elements of Sydney Diocese rather than its incursive elements, discussion regarding Sydney Anglicanism’s particular liturgy has been limited to how it reflects a particular ‘low-church’ ecclesiology. As such, an in-depth analysis of Sydney Anglican liturgical practices would be a welcome addition to current studies. Finally, following on from this thesis’ focus on Archbishop Jensen, future studies might consider how current Archbishop Davies further shapes Sydney Anglican discourse.

This thesis has been but one contribution to what will no doubt remain a topic of enduring controversy and interest. It began with Samuel Marsden, a polarising figure in Australian and Anglican Church history, depicted by some as a ruthless ‘flogging parson’, and revered by others as a pioneering missionary in a hostile context. Jensen will likewise be remembered in disparate terms. He will be recalled, variously, as a backwards-looking Archbishop who attempted to “inhabit the past” (Anonymous, personal communication, December 2012), a visionary and inspiring conservative evangelical leader, and a founder of an international breakaway group within the Global Anglican Communion. Regarding his long-term legacy, it is worth noting that despite his apparent effort to swing Sydney Diocese against women’s ordination, Jensen never totally quashed minority dissent regarding this—and a number of other issues. Notwithstanding Sydney’s official conservative position on these issues, activists continue to agitate for their church to accept the ordination of women and to adopt policies that are more inclusive of gays and lesbians. For many, this ongoing advocacy is a source of hope. When Michael Kirby was asked whether he thought the diocese might adopt such policies, he responded with unbridled optimism—“of course it will [...] Undoubtedly. It’s only a question of time” (M. Kirby, personal communication, 29 January 2013). If Kirby proves correct and such a seismic—and seemingly unlikely—shift occurs within Sydney Diocese, Jensen’s legacy will take on yet another hue. He will be remembered as the Archbishop who worked hard to oppose what he saw as the Global Anglican Communion’s capitulation to modernity, but only succeeded in postponing its inevitable progress.

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## Notes

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### Introduction

<sup>1</sup> The debate surrounding women's ordination is one of international import. One example of this debate on the international stage comes from the United States' biggest Protestant denomination. In 2000 the Southern Baptist Convention voted to restrict the role of ordained pastor to men, rescinding the prior ordination of some women who had already served the church. Former United States President Jimmy Carter severed ties to this church, citing the gender restriction as a reason for this "painful decision" (Sengupta, 2000: 1).

<sup>2</sup> Sydney is currently one of four Anglican dioceses within Australia that do not currently ordain women to all ministries. There are twenty-three dioceses altogether (Porter, 2006: 2).

<sup>3</sup> Porter summarised propositional revelation as "the theory that God is revealed solely through propositions presented in the Bible; that is, through the written words of Scripture [...] The theory refers to revelation imparted through rational thought processes alone" (Porter, 2006: 24).

<sup>4</sup> St James King Street and Christ Church St Laurence, Railway Square are two of the last Anglo-Catholic churches remaining in Sydney Diocese (Hilliard, 1997: 4).

<sup>5</sup> While Giles did not specify which of Wright's ideas proved to be sticking points for Sydney, these may include his rejection of a literal second coming of Jesus (Wright and Borg, 1999) and his reconsideration of many traditional interpretations of St. Paul's letters (Wright, 1997, 2003).

<sup>6</sup> An Archbishop's power is not absolute. In an interview for Paul Barry's website *The Power Index*, Jensen outlined the role's limits by saying, "I cannot sack a clergyman. I cannot move him around. I have powers of course, but the powers are limited by the Synod, by the law under which we operate, and by custom" (The Power Index, 2012). Even with these apparent restrictions in place however, it is important that religious leaders with an Archbishop's

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degree of influence are sufficiently held accountable for the decisions and statements they make.

<sup>7</sup> A Kindle version of this title was issued in 2014.

<sup>8</sup> This line of argument proved to be controversial when *God Under Howard* was released. In a particularly scathing review, the Secretary of the conservative Family Council of Victoria Bill Muehlenburg likened Maddox's work to Dan Brown's novel *The Da Vinci Code*; "Both can be viewed as works of fiction masquerading as non-fiction and, as with Brown, Maddox finds plenty of sinister conspiracies, shadowy networks of evil, and religious bogeymen" (Muehlenburg, 2005). Another criticism of this work came from the book's subject. While Maddox claimed early in *God Under Howard* that John Howard refused to participate in an interview for the book, the former Prime Minister alleged that he was never actually approached (Williams, 2013: 211).

<sup>9</sup> Billy Graham has since espoused a Soteriology with which Jensen profoundly disagrees. When once asked by a student at the Kennedy School of Government's JFK Forum his opinion on whether "people from other religions—Jews and the rest—are going to hell" Graham responded that "Well, God doesn't really ask my advice on these matters" (Wallis, 2008: 150).

## **Chapter One: The Jensen Ascension**

<sup>10</sup> The Pastoral Epistles include the biblical letters 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus. The controversy surrounding the authorship of these letters may be partially ascribed to the fact that they contain the infamous injunction against women teaching men (1 Timothy 2:12).

## **Chapter Two: The Power House, Moore College and Sydney Anglican Discourse**

<sup>11</sup> According to the Bob Jones University 2011–2012 Student Handbook, "Students are to avoid any types of entertainment that could be considered immodest or that contain profanity,

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scatological realism, sexual perversion, erotic realism, lurid violence, occultism and false philosophical or religious assumptions.” Stealing, sexual relations outside of marriage, possession of pornography, drinking alcohol or taking drugs, and participating in a public demonstration for a cause the university opposes are all grounds for a student’s immediate dismissal (BJU Handbook, 2011: 28, 45). This long list of strictures serves to produce students that can faithfully live out the college’s ideal for ethical Christian conduct.

<sup>12</sup> The initial impetus for Mascord writing the open letter occurred when his local parish, South Sydney, had a new rector installed without the congregation’s consultation, and the diocese’s Indigenous People’s Ministry Committee had four non-indigenous appointees added without consultation with its chairperson, Pastor Ray Minniecon (2012: 159). Archbishop Jensen later met with Minniecon to repair this rift (Mascord, 2012: 242).

<sup>13</sup> Indeed, during an interview conducted for this thesis, Mascord stressed that he was still on good terms with the college’s faculty, to the extent of still regularly using the college library (K. Mascord, personal communication, 6 December 2012).

### **Chapter Three: Priscilla and Aquila: Complementarianism and Gender Issues**

<sup>14</sup> While this chapter deals with rhetorical battles over the ordination of women and homosexuals in a linked fashion, not all biblical scholars that argue in favour of the former support the latter. For example, Kevin Giles is a moderate evangelical who has passionately argued the case for women’s ordination, but views homosexuality as sinful (Porter, 2006: 125).

<sup>15</sup> There are, of course, many exceptions to this generalisation, with the Uniting Church in Australia being one denomination active in Sydney that ordains women and gay and lesbian candidates (conditional upon a congregation’s agreement to accept them). Furthermore, a number of inner-city independent churches actively involve gay and lesbian congregants in church life, such as Crave Metropolitan Community Church.

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<sup>16</sup> When many Presbyterian churches joined Congregationalists and Methodists to form the Uniting Church in 1977, Continuing Presbyterians opted to discontinue the ordination of women.

<sup>17</sup> The assumption that Jesus had no female disciples has been questioned. Of particular interest here is Luke 10:38–42, in which a woman named Mary sits at Jesus’ feet. This was the traditional pose for a disciple learning from a rabbi. As Wright observed, “To sit at the feet of a rabbi was what you did *if you wanted to be a rabbi yourself*. There is no thought here of learning for learning’s sake. Mary has quietly taken her place as a would-be teacher and preacher of the kingdom of God” (Wright, 2004: 131).

#### **Chapter Four: Sydney Diocese and the Australian Public Sphere**

<sup>18</sup> Whether or not Christianity is more of a force for good or ill is a matter of vexed debate. While this chapter is not devoted per se into delving into this question, it is important to give a brief exploration here. Australia’s church agencies have unquestionably contributed to the wellbeing of society through their provision of welfare services, with the Uniting Church, for example, being the biggest non-government provider of welfare in the nation. Additionally, churches have long lobbied governments on all levels on a number of social justice concerns. This dates back a long time in Australia’s history, with the first Australian Roman Catholic Vicar General William Ullathorne vigorously campaigning against slavery, a vocation that saw him give evidence to the House of Commons Select Committee on Transportation (Maddox, 2005: 243). Justice Michael Adams of the New South Wales Supreme Court is a committed Christian, and previously served on the Uniting Church (NSW Synod) Board for Social Responsibility. In a paper presented to the Inaugural Australasian Christian Legal Convention in 2001, Justice Adams passionately argued that, while individual Christians had stood against systemic injustices, the institutional churches had largely opposed, or been divided over, major humane changes to the law. Citing examples over the past four centuries, he argued:



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*It seems almost impossible to escape the damning conclusion that the Church contributed nothing to the cause of justice, let alone kindness [...] I do not think that it can be seriously contended that any substantial legal, social, or political advance, even in the modern era, has been marked by Christian consensus, with the possible exceptions in the USA of the extension of civil rights to the Afro/Americans in the 1960s and the 1970s and changes to the Australian Constitution concerning indigenous Australians in 1967 (Adams, 2001, cited in Lohrey, 2006: 68).*

Adams, then, was pessimistic about the role the Church has played in global politics. In making his suggestions about what the mode of engagement should be for the Church in the Australian public sphere, he wrote:

*I think that it can do little else than not stand in the way [...] In the end, there is little to no reason to suppose that the Church will try to defend that which it never helped to create, a liberal democracy governed by the rule of law [...] In this context, the concerted attack on secular humanism by significant elements of both Catholic and Protestant Churches, though often in ignorance, should be seen as especially sinister (Adams, 2001, cited in Lohrey, 2006: 69).*

Justice Adam's above reference to an "especially sinister" "attack on secular humanism by significant elements of both Catholic and Protestant Churches" may be read as a thinly veiled attack on the Sydney Diocese. This is particularly clear when reading Archbishop Jensen's inaugural presidential address from the 2001 Synod. As explored in Chapter Six, Jensen assails secularism a number of times in this address, reaching a dramatic crescendo when he argues that, "secularism damages the nation and fills the halls of Hell" (Jensen, 2001). Justice Adams' conclusions are particularly alarming considering that they come from a public Christian, and a member of one of Australia's major mainline churches (Lohrey, 2007: 69). Whatever may be said of the Australian churches' record in the struggle for human rights, it can be readily concluded that, as well as challenging majority opinion and the domination of

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minorities in Australian society, they have also followed, and sustained these.

<sup>19</sup> The Australian Christian Lobby does not officially claim peak body status. The organisation's official website described it as: "a political lobby representing individual Christians" and "neither denominationally or politically aligned" (ACL website, 2012).

<sup>20</sup> Jensen's broad-based approach to politics saw him publicly support certain gay and lesbian rights while opposing others. In a 2006 interview with Julia Baird, the then-Archbishop cautiously expressed support for Warren Entsch's private member's bill to extend superannuation rights to same-sex partnerships. "Justice", Jensen said, "is an absolutely fundamental virtue in all human relationships" (Baird, 2006). This *social justice* frame of the Archbishop's discourse was absent from subsequent public statements regarding same-sex marriage, which the former Archbishop did not regard as a human rights issue (Jensen, 2012).

## **Chapter Five: Sydney Diocese's Media Relations**

<sup>21</sup> For reasons related to brevity, this chapter does not consider the diocese's social media efforts at any real length, interesting though this analysis might prove.

<sup>22</sup> Kirby refers here to the January 2013 edition of the Sydney Institute's *Media Watch Dog*, a conservative publication that works to scrutinise the performance of key Australian media outlets. In this issue, columnist Gerard Henderson nominated Jensen's fellow *Q&A* panelist Catherine Deveny for a "Special Prize For Inconceivable Ignorance", due to what he perceived as the comedienne's disrespect to the prelate. He wrote, "Only the most ignorant would assert that the Anglican Archbishop of Sydney—who attests to the Protestant faith—would not have read the Bible" (Henderson, 2013).

<sup>23</sup> Also noteworthy is the fact that Julia Baird is the sister of current Premier of New South Wales, Mike Baird.

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<sup>24</sup> The Uniting Church in Australia's 2003 Assembly meeting passed Proposal 84, for example, which leaves the matter of ordination to individual congregations' adjudication.

<sup>25</sup> There were a number of flaws in Douglas' piece, perhaps the worst of which is a tendency to not distinguish between different traditions within Christianity when she wrote "Women in the church are, in fact, largely controlled by the 'Cult of Nice'. That you—a woman—were passionate and disagreeably vocal on national television broke more seldom-spoken Christian rules than I can count" (Douglas, 2012). This comment does not apply to Quaker and Uniting Church congregations, where women preach and serve as ministers.

### **Chapter Six: Critical Discourse Analysis of Peter Jensen's Inaugral Address**

<sup>26</sup> Flew initially argued that when theists were made to provide evidence, the concept of theism was made "even more precarious than it did before" (Flew, 2004: 53). However, he went on to abandon this line of reasoning when he became a Deist (Flew, 2004: 1).

<sup>27</sup> The Theological Declaration of Barmen 1934 was a document adopted by German Christians who opposed the Nazi Party's co-opting of Germany's Protestant churches. The "German Christian Movement" had added elements of Nazi ideology to the practice and worship of the faith. Against this, Barmen declared that, "We reject the false doctrine, as if the Church, in human arrogance, could place the Word and work of the Lord in service to any arbitrarily-chosen wishes, goals and plans" (trans. in Becker, 2012).

<sup>28</sup> One example of this conservative emphasis on heritage comes from then-Opposition Leader Tony Abbott's description of his political tradition as one that "values institutions which have stood the test of time" (Abbott, 2013).

<sup>29</sup> Strategic ambiguity can also be seen in the old Ford company slogan "Quality is job one." This ensures that the statement is more inclusive of company-wide tasks than would be the case if the slogan read "Quality through quality engineering" (Eisenburg, Goodall, and Thretheway, 1986, cited in Ryder, 2010: 14).

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<sup>30</sup> Barth believed that rather than choosing between salvation for a few or universalism, Christians should leave salvation a mystery in the hands of God; “The church will not then preach an apokatastasis, nor will it preach a powerless grace of Jesus Christ or a wickedness of men which is too powerful for it. But without any weakening of the contrast, and also without any arbitrary dualism, it will preach the overwhelming power of grace and the weakness of human wickedness in face of it” (trans. in Bromiley, 1957: 447, cited in Migliore, 2004: 323).

<sup>31</sup> A more recent expression of this long-term concern for refugees is a September 2012 joint statement from the National Council of Churches in Australia. Issued in response to the Gillard Labor Government’s reinstatement of offshore processing, the statement describes the principle of ‘Welcoming the stranger’ as being “core to the Christian faith” (Aspinall et al., 2012).