

PORT ARTHUR: THE DISSENTING NARRATIVE

Retired Australian teacher, Arthur Marcel, examines the case for Martin Bryant not being the Port Arthur shooter.

Black swans

Celebrated sleuth Sherlock Holmes' most famous quote went something like, "Firstly, Watson, we eliminate the impossible, and then we are left with a range of possibilities, one of which, no matter how seemingly improbable, will be the truth." Holmes' creator, author Arthur Conan Doyle, appears to have gotten it wrong when he described his most famous character as a master of deduction. The fictional detective's methods are clearly inductive. Induction is a bottom-up process, starting with facts derived from empirical observation and interview. These facts are then used to form working hypotheses which eventually lead to logically probable explanations. Deduction is the very reverse of induction, a top-down process starting with general principles and beliefs, which are used to explain specific situations. Deductive reasoning works very well in axiomatic environments. So long as the premises are true and the method syllogistically valid, the answers are always correct. If initial premises are wrong, however, it is a case of garbage in, garbage out. Induction, on the other hand, only assigns degrees of probability based on objective evaluation of evidence and can never say what is absolutely true. It can, however, rule out what is not true with a single example, the legendary black swan.

There have been more than five independent, privately funded, investigations into the Port Arthur massacre. These investigations have produced a consensual alternative narrative very different to the official one. At least twenty separate evidence-based arguments have been put forward in support of this dissenting narrative, with at least two of these being black swan type arguments in that they completely and without doubt prove the official narrative to be false.

Most Australians are naively accepting of the official narrative without caring to know the details of it. For those who engage with the dissenting story, the experience is deeply troubling.

The Official Narrative

It is alleged that Martin Bryant left his New Town home shortly before 10am on 28th April 1996 after having spent the night (and the previous three nights) with his girlfriend, Petra Willmot. He drove his yellow Volvo 240 GL sedan with surfboard on top to Seascope Cottage, a B & B about 3.4 kms north of the entrance to the Port Arthur Historic Site (PAHS). He had two rifles with him, one rifle being an AR-15 (a high velocity semi-automatic rifle, American design, original company Armalite but now Colt, calibre .223 Remington aka 5.56mm NATO, civilian version of the widely used M-16), the other rifle an SLR (a high velocity, semi-automatic military rifle, Belgian design, company Fabrique Nationale, designation FN-FAL, but also manufactured by Lithgow Arms for the Australian military forces in the 60s and 70s, designation L1A1, calibre 7.62mm NATO aka .308 Winchester), as well as a Daewoo 12 gauge automatic shotgun and two pairs of Smith and Wesson handcuffs. Upon arrival, he used the AR-15 to shoot dead the owners of Seascope, David and Sally Martin, people he was long acquainted with and against whom he is purported to have held some kind of grudge. The two shots were heard by a person from the neighbouring property after 10.00am and definitely prior to 11.00am [see witness statement: Simmons, Andrew David, testified 6 days after event].

It is alleged that Bryant then drove to Port Arthur Historic Site (PAHS), entering through the tollbooth to park his car down near the waterfront, opposite the Broad Arrow Café. He took his newly purchased blue Prince sports bag containing the AR-15, and a video camera from the boot and carried them into the café. He put the bag and the camera on a table and bought a meal and drink, which he consumed outside on the verandah. When finished eating, he went back inside, opened the bag, took out the rifle and proceeded to shoot dead ten people and seriously wound another ten in just under 30 seconds.

He then moved to the adjacent gift shop where he killed another eight people and wounded two. Total elapsed time at this stage was 90–120 seconds. He had fired 29 shots from a 30 round magazine and was heard changing magazines as he exited the café. Bryant left his blue Prince sports bag on the table he had been using, along with his video camera.

He then carried the rifle to the bus parking area where he shot more people, bringing the total casualties to 26 dead (including the Martins), 18 wounded. At this crime site, in addition to the AR-15, he also used the SLR, which he took from the boot of the Volvo. He then drove slowly along Jetty Road towards the toll booth. On the way he stopped to kill Mrs Mikac and her two young daughters with the AR-15. At the toll booth he shot dead four people who had just arrived in a gold coloured BMW. Total now 33 dead (including the Martins), 19 wounded.

He then transferred his two rifles to the BMW (leaving the shotgun in the Volvo) and drove the BMW a little further on to the Port Arthur service station. There, he kidnapped Glenn Pears at gunpoint, forcing him into the boot of the BMW, and then shot Pears' girlfriend dead through the door of their Toyota car. After that, he drove off up the highway to Seascope in the BMW, where he bogged the car in soft ground behind the house. Then he ran back to the roadway to shoot at oncoming cars. Several people were wounded but all survived. After shooting at five cars, he ran back to the house, removing Glenn Pears from the car boot at gunpoint and taking him inside to secure him to heavy furniture with the two sets of Smith and Wesson handcuffs.

The so-called Seascapes siege then began. The BMW was soon seen to be burning. The siege lasted till the next morning when Bryant allegedly set fire to the house and eventually emerged with third degree burns to his back. He was arrested. Total dead 35 (all shot), total wounded 23 (24 if you include Bryant), seven crime scenes in all.

In the ruins of Seascapes, several firearms (or parts of firearms) were found, the most notable being a badly damaged AR-15 and a badly damaged SLR, allegedly the PAHS murder weapons.

The Dissenting Narrative

Acknowledgement (in chronological order) is hereby made of the investigative work of authors such as:

Noel McDonald: "A Presentation on the Port Arthur Incident: Prelude to a Royal Commission", (2001);
Andrew McGregor: "Deceit and Terrorism – Port Arthur", (2001-2004);
Wendy Scurr: "My experiences at Port Arthur" in "Deceit and Terrorism – Port Arthur" Andrew McGregor (2001-2004);
Stewart Beattie: "A Gunsmith's Notebook on Port Arthur" (6th edition May 2006);
Carl Wernerhoff: "A Critical Study of the Port Arthur Massacre", (2006);
Ian McNiven: "Port Arthur Coverup", (2009?);
Carleen Bryant: "My Story" (2010);
Keith Allan Noble: "Mass Murder, Official Killing in Tasmania Australia" (2013); "Official Terror in Tasmania Australia" (2019);

as well as other authors on internet sites such as Gumshoe News and iiNet (Port Arthur Massacre index).

Circumstantial precursors

A 22-body mortuary van was purchased some months before the massacre by the Tasmanian government and sold not long after; a media conference was organised for that day in Hobart with large numbers (about 700) of visiting Australian and international journalists on hand to cover the story; a medical conference was also held for trauma doctors from around the country and overseas on the same day in Hobart; another conference for senior PAHS management took them off site for the day (first time ever); and a tour group of 80 plus North American retirees was booked in for a trip on the PAHS ferry to the Isle of the Dead for 1.30pm. Finally, it is highly significant that the drafting of the National Firearms Agreement had been completed only months prior. The states were required to relinquish their authority to the Federal Government, but Queensland and Tasmanian Governments were refusing to do this.

There is also a report of a special embalming box being ordered: Two specially designed embalming machines were sent to Hobart: "One firm in particular, Nelson Brothers (7 Droop Street, Footscray, VIC 3011), had organised for an embalming machine box and a special large equipment case to be manufactured ready for the incident. These two containers were the envy of all embalmers and worked extremely well, was recorded..." [Stephen Parry. Port Arthur massacre 1996 – AFDA [Australian Funeral Directors Association] national embalming team – detailed report; Port Arthur Seminar Papers; 1997: p. 112]. See also: <http://members.iinet.net.au/~nedwood/INT.MEDIA.RELEASE.pdf>

The Internet

It might be asked why there would be such openly obvious preparation for a massacre; however it should be remembered that in 1996 the Internet was in its infancy. Its disruptive potential in terms of the dissemination of dissenting information had been neither realised nor tested. In the absence of the Internet, the confidence displayed was indeed justified, because, ultimately, it has only been through means of the Internet that such dissenting information has come to light and reached the audience it has. The conventional mass media certainly has not contributed one iota to the dissenting story, not only unquestioningly pushing the official line, but in many cases leading the fray like a pack of mindless foxhounds.

Firearms

It is true that Martin Bryant had an interest in firearms, but he said it was more a pleasure derived from their ownership than their use. For an Australian male of his age, especially one who grew up in a country area, this situation is not unusual. About seven years before the Port Arthur shootings, he bought an AR-10 semi-automatic rifle (the original ArmaLite 7.62mm NATO calibre design from which the smaller AR-15 was later modelled) after answering an ad in the Hobart Mercury [Police interview transcript 1/5: see Wikileaks: https://wikileaks.org/wiki/Martin_Bryant_complete_interview]. He also admitted to buying an AR-15 five months before the shootings. As well, he admitted to purchasing a Daewoo 12 gauge automatic shotgun about four months before the shootings. He said he had used the three firearms very rarely. In fact, he said he had never fired the shotgun at all, being a little afraid of its power (meaning, supposedly, its recoil). Of the three guns identified in the official narrative as being involved in the PAHS shootings, only the shotgun possibly belonged to Bryant. The AR-15 was not his. It was later identified as a weapon surrendered during a Victoria Police amnesty several years before. There was no suggestion in the official narrative that an AR-10 was used at PAHS, and Bryant's AR-10 was actually in a gun shop for repairs at the time (Tasmania Police tried to coerce the gun shop proprietor Terry Hill into lying about this, but he refused and subsequently had his dealer's licence revoked). As for the FN-FAL (SLR), Bryant denied ever having seen it before [Police interview transcript 1/5: see Wikileaks:

https://wikileaks.org/wiki/Martin_Bryant_complete_interview]. Bryant freely admitted that he possessed neither a drivers license nor a gun license.

Sunday 28th April

Some time before the shootings, Bryant was befriended by a person he referred to as "Tiger". Bryant was not overly fond of this person, in fact he behaved as if he was afraid of him. Both Bryant's mother and girlfriend were of the opinion that contact with Tiger caused Bryant to become anxious. It has been suggested in various publications that a Tasmania Police SOG (Special Operations Group) officer, Michael (Mick) Charles Dyson may have been the man Bryant knew as Tiger.

That Sunday morning, Petra Willmot left the New Town house before Bryant. She was going to spend the Sunday with her parents as was her usual practice. She later said Bryant was happy and relaxed when they parted. He told her he intended to go surfing at Roaring Beach on the Tasman Peninsula south of PAHS.

This narrative asserts that Martin Bryant was pre-ordained to take the blame for the Port Arthur shootings. For conspirators to be sure that Bryant would finish the day inside Seascope Cottage during the siege, his movements from the time he left the New Town house therefore not only needed to be pre-determined, but also monitored and controlled. So a central assertion of this narrative is that a key conspirator, possibly the man he knew as Tiger, arranged or suggested the plan to go to Roaring Beach that morning, and that somewhere along his journey, Bryant was intercepted and taken to, or told to go to, Seascope Cottage.

Uncertainty

Bryant's movements during the day are not easy to verify. He claimed he departed the New Town house later than officially stated; in fact not until 11.00am [Police interview transcript: see Wikileaks: https://wikileaks.org/wiki/Martin_Bryant_complete_interview]. Witnesses reported seeing him at four locations en route that morning, where he shopped, got petrol and had a coffee. However, only one of these sightings (a coffee stop at Forcett, even though Bryant later incorrectly recalled having had the coffee at nearby Sorell) was a credible identification of Bryant [see witness statement: King JG, testified 19 days after the event]; however, it is sufficient to make it impossible for Bryant to have been at Seascope before 11.00am when David Martin was murdered. The time of this sighting also fits perfectly with Bryant having left home at 11.00am. The times of the other three sightings do not fit at all with the timing of this credible sighting of Bryant. The other three sightings are thought to have been of the eventual PAHS gunman (Broad Arrow Café gunman at least, because there may have been more than one gunman that day), who travelled the route earlier than Bryant (about an hour earlier) and was leaving a trail of deception to implicate him. One shop person actually remembered Bryant (and supposedly his car) from a previous trip and said, "When he came in on the Sunday to buy the lighter he had lost weight and his hair was considerably longer. He used to have short hair...He just came in, bought the lighter [Martin Bryant did not smoke tobacco or drugs] and left. It was as though I was a total stranger to him – which I wasn't" [see witness statement: Kessarios, Angelo, testified 9 days after the event]. At another sighting, Bryant's impersonator actually carried a large bag (presumably the blue Prince sports bag that was later to become an important element in the official narrative) into a shop simply for it to be seen in his possession [see witness statement: Diamantis, Spiros, testified 50 days after the event]. The shooter was driving a yellow Volvo 240 sedan, same model as Bryant's, with at least one, possibly two, surfboards on top.

This is where the narrative becomes difficult to relate with certainty. Bryant claimed he turned off the Arthur Highway at Taranna and took the northern section of the Nubeena Road to Roaring Beach [Police interview transcript: see Wikileaks: https://wikileaks.org/wiki/Martin_Bryant_complete_interview]. This route puts the beach at about one and a half hours drive from New Town, so counting the coffee stop at Forcett, Bryant could not have arrived at the beach much before 12.40pm (if he had left his house at 11.00am). He also said the beach was about 5 minutes walk from the car park and that he surfed for 20 minutes (as he didn't have a wetsuit it might have been only 10 minutes given the water temperature at that time of year). He then said he got dressed and headed back to Nubeena, where he had another coffee and a toasted sandwich.

He also admitted to having had his AR-15 rifle and his Daewoo shotgun with him in the car. He actually kept his guns in the car most of the time. He said he stopped on the way at a place called Murdunna, where he had used the guns on targets before. He said he had eight or nine cartridges for the AR-15 and fired two (and only two) of them at a target but didn't use the shotgun (remember he claimed he had never fired it). So that must have taken at least another twenty minutes or so. Bryant said that after eating his meal at Nubeena, he drove along the southern section of the Nubeena Road past the PAHS turn off towards Seascope. It is about a 20 minute drive from Nubeena to the PAHS turnoff.

Three kilometres from PAHS on Palmers Lookout Road, Roger/Roy Maxwell Larner owned a property. On the night of the siege (quite amazing in itself), he testified that at about 1.05pm that afternoon, Sunday 28th April, he was leaving his premises when he encountered Bryant coming along the road. He said that Bryant told him "he was down here surfing". They talked for a few minutes, so it is unlikely that Bryant left Larner before 1.15pm, the time the actual shooter was driving through the PAHS tollbooth. The reported timing of this encounter, however, is problematic. How could Bryant have been there at that time and still have had his swim at Roaring Beach and his coffee and sandwich at Nubeena, not to mention his shooting practice, if he had left his house at 11.00am? What is even more problematic

is that Bryant claimed this meeting with Lerner never occurred. At the police interview he said he had not seen the man for ten years. Now why would he lie? He was being handed the perfect alibi. In fact, Bryant comes across as completely truthful during his police interviews. He might have been talking nonsense, but he appeared to have truly believed it. The two detectives could not break his story.

The shooter

The PAHS shooter, that is, the man driving the lookalike yellow Volvo seen en route by witnesses Hammond, Christopher Frank; Diamantis, Spiros; and Kessaros, Angelo arrived at Seascap about mid morning. It is highly likely he was the one who shot David Martin dead before 11.00am, both the Martins at this stage having been bound and gagged by a co-conspirator.

In his book "A Presentation on the Port Arthur Incident", (2001: p.68), Noel McDonald writes:

"What we do know for sure is that Mr. David Martin was killed with two gunshots, and that he had been gagged, and that Mrs. Sally or Noelene Martin had been bludgeoned with five blows to the head resulting in a fractured skull. We also know that there were shots heard in the area around the possible or suggested time of murder, as with most times expressed in the Court Document, they are approximate only. For the sake of a little detective work, many of the facts pertaining to what actually did and did not occur on that morning should have been clearly evident, there is no mistaking the reality that the authorities, the prosecution, and the defence counsels, all have turned a blind eye to the obvious, and even worse is the fact that the DPP has distorted and ignored what has been recounted by eyewitnesses, equally disturbing is the omission of facts." (sic)

Other evidence suggests (see book: "A Gunsmith's Notebook on Port Arthur by Stewart K Beattie) that the guns about to be used at the PAHS were an AR-15 (similar to the one owned by Bryant and carried in his car but which has since vanished), and an AR-10 (similar to the rifle owned by Bryant that was at that time in the custody of Hobart gun shop proprietor Terry Hill), and a Daewoo automatic shotgun that might have been the one owned by Bryant (and carried in his car that day), but which wouldn't have been if Bryant hadn't arrived at Seascap before the shooter left. There was no SLR (FN-FAL) 7.62mm rifle taken to or used at Port Arthur that day. The broken one found in the Seascap ruins was placed there after the fire by persons unknown after it was belatedly realised that Bryant's 7.62mm gun was in Hill's gun shop for repairs. This throwdown rifle was built to metric specifications (a European model: serial number preceded by letter 'g') and would probably not have accepted the Australian made imperial specification magazines that were later allegedly found in the boot of Bryant's Volvo. When shown the rifle at the police interview, Bryant said he had never seen it before [Police interview transcript: see Wikileaks: https://wikileaks.org/wiki/Martin_Bryant_complete_interview]. Moreover, he did not even recognise its type (the workhorse of the Australian Military Forces for thirty years), which shows just what little knowledge of firearms he had.

Before departing for the PAHS on his deadly mission, the shooter test fired both assault rifles. "A series of rapidly fired shots" coming from the direction of Seascap was heard between 10.00am and 11.00am by an experienced shooter neighbour living about 500 to 600 metres away, who identified the shots as similar to ones heard later in the day coming from the direction of the PAHS [see witness statement: McCutcheon, Douglas William, testified 72 days after the event]. It is thought that this gunfire came after the two shots reported by Seascap's immediate neighbour, Andrew David Simmons, and, because he had at that stage left the property, he did not hear them.

The Broad Arrow Café shooter was a male in his late teens or early twenties with a marred complexion, wearing a long, brownish, full sleeved coat. He had straight-ish blonde below-shoulder-length hair, possibly a wig. This shooter has been identified as one of two possible men, both probably now dead. Before leaving Seascap it seems he contaminated a knife by plunging it into or wiping it on the dead body of David Martin. The official narrative has this knife belonging to Martin Bryant. It was left inside the blue Prince sports bag on the table the shooter used inside the Broad Arrow Café, the intent being to link Bryant with the murder of the Martins. The shooter put the blue bag into a larger black bag along with the two rifles and the shotgun and placed them into the boot (or on the back seat) of the Volvo he had driven that morning. The blue bag was not long enough to carry the weapons. There appears to be no other reason for including the blue bag other than to implicate Bryant.

The distance between Seascap Cottage and the PAHS tollbooth is 3.4 kilometres; however, only a short distance from Seascap the shooter stopped his car behind a van that was parked on the side of the road. Two women were enjoying the view. They also had a problem with their motor, which wouldn't start. The shooter identified the cause of the problem immediately upon inspection of the engine compartment. He re-connected a loose wire and the motor started at once. This episode indicates the shooter had mechanical expertise, unlike Bryant, who was well known for a total lack of practical abilities. The shooter then asked them if they had anything to sell, meaning that he wanted to buy marijuana. They supplied him with a "small satchel" and asked for \$50 in return, which he happily paid. The woman who actually did the deal described him as "having an odour about him which was quite strong. It was a musty type of smell", which could have been an indication of recent drug ingestion. "I can describe this man as having long bleached blonde hair. He xxxxd to me to be about 19-20 years of age." (sic) [see witness statement: Lynd, Gaye Ester, testified 32 days after the event]. Bryant was 28 years old at the time and had naturally blonde wavy hair and had never been known to use marijuana or any other illicit drug (although he admitted to liking beer).

At PAHS the shooter paid at the tollbooth and then drove to the waterfront (even though told to park in the main parking area). He became aware that the ferry had left half an hour earlier (at 1.00pm) than scheduled because of a surprise change in the tour timetable. This was a major problem. The local police had ostensibly at this stage been decoyed to the other side of the Tasman Peninsula, and the shooting had to start at 1.30pm, so somehow (either by a plan B pre-arrangement or because the shooter was in radio contact with his controller) the target was changed to the café directly opposite the ferry terminal. The shooter took the heavily loaded black bag from the Volvo as well as Bryant's video camera, slinging both over his shoulder, and walked into the café.

Several people remember the shooter entering the café. Indeed, he seemed to go out of his way to bump into people and be noticed. When he was sitting on the deck outside, he was seen to be muttering to himself and looking anxiously towards the car park. Perhaps he was talking on his two-way radio, having earphones concealed under his long wig. Perhaps he was waiting for Bryant's Volvo to arrive on site, this being the signal for the shooting to begin.

The most common element of description for the Broad Arrow Café gunman that day was his hair. Martin Bryant had only recently begun to grow his hair longer than normal. The photo that was stolen from his home on the night of the shootings and which appeared illegally on the front page of the Hobart Mercury the following Tuesday (April 30, 1996) showed him with his hair as long as it ever had been. As already said, it was a natural blonde colour, very wavy and, while quite long, it was above the shoulders. Witnesses described the hair of the Broad Arrow Café gunman variously as "bedraggled", "bleached", "straight", "flowing in the breeze", "flowing across his chest", but never as wavy. More than nineteen witnesses described the gunman's hair as "shoulder length" or "below shoulder length" (seven witnesses) [see witness statements: Buckley, T M (testified same day as the event); Cheok, F (testified 78 days after the event); Cheok N E (testified 77 days after the event); Collyer G D (testified 9 days after the event); Cranwell, W I (testified 6 days after the event); Daviess (*sic*), B J (testified 37 days after the event); Dutton, J H (testified same day as the event); Edward, J M (testified one day after the event); Edwards, C V (testified same day as the event); Francis, J A (testified same day as the event); Kateros, Y (testified 12 days after the event); Lynd, G (testified 32 days after the event); Maloney, J A (testified 57 days after the event); Parker, C M (testified 4 days after the event); Pearce, K J (testified same day as the event); Prout, C F (testified 37 days after the event); Rabe, D L (testified same day as the event); Riviere, J M (testified one day after the event); Sargent, M R (testified one day after the event)].

The shootings took place more or less as per the official narrative but there were differences. Firstly, the shooter was in the café for five to seven minutes after the first shot and more deliberate in choosing victims. He also fired many more rounds than the 29 stated in the official narrative. He changed magazines on the AR-15 in the café during the shooting as well as when leaving. Rounds were fired from all three weapons, mostly from the AR-15 but about four from the AR-10 and one round from the gun, pellets hitting Dennis Olsen in the face, chest, neck and arm, and being positively identified as a shotgun wound by Broad Arrow Café first responder and trained paramedic, Wendy Scurr [see witness statement: Scurr, W]; as well as an article written by Mrs Scurr entitled "My experiences at Port Arthur", published in "Deceit and Terrorism – Port Arthur" by Andrew McGregor (2001-2004)].

The shooter shot from waist high, holding his weapon about 100mm above the right hip. This is a significant point as during a videoed police interview Bryant was shown to have held a rifle left-handedly [Police interview transcript: see Wikileaks: https://wikileaks.org/wiki/Martin_Bryant_complete_interview]. It is common for otherwise right-handed individuals to shoot rifles left-handedly if their master eye is their left one, and this may well be the case with Bryant. The shooter took shoulder aim at some people on the opposite side of the room but most shots were at very close range. A malfunctioning fire door at the back of the gift shop turned out to be a death trap for seven people (five who tried to open it and two who knew it didn't work and unsuccessfully hid behind the counter).

Researchers are of the opinion that there were agent accomplices of the shooter in the café who were surprised by the change of venue. Anthony Nightingale, for instance, stood and shouted at the shooter, "No, no, not here!" and was shot dead for his trouble [see witness statement: Crosswell, Peter David, testified same day as the event]. Nightingale was just one of many suspect people at PAHS that day whose main job was not so much to facilitate the shooting, but mainly to sterilise the site immediately after the shooting. The four people in the BMW appear to have been definitely involved, two of them joining the gunman at one stage in the Volvo for discussions that eventually led to argument and then to their deaths. These people were apparently delivering a fresh car to the gunman so that the yellow Volvo could be left behind to incriminate Bryant.

Bryant's strange tale

Bryant specifically denied having entered the PAHS at all that day. He claimed he couldn't afford the entry fee (Bryant's inheritance was strictly controlled by his guardian, the Public Trustee, and he was overspent). He said he had not been into the Historic Site during the preceding six or seven years due to the fact that the entry fee had risen so much. He did say, however, that he called in at Seascapes on his way back home from Roaring Beach [Wikileaks: https://wikileaks.org/wiki/Martin_Bryant_complete_interview]. Whatever the time it was when he got there, he claimed that when he knocked on the door, no one answered, so he assumed no one was at home and continued on his way. He also said he had not seen the Martins since 1991. There was a credible sighting of a yellow Volvo with surfboard on top turning into the entrance to Seascapes at "about 12.00pm" [see witness statement: Nichols, Jai Craig, testified 10 days after the event]. The Volvo was travelling northwards, away from the PAHS turnoff, which fits. The time, however, does not fit with Bryant's stated timetable. Actually, the witness claimed he had seen the same car going in

the other direction about 20 or so minutes before. There may also have been a third yellow Volvo 240 sedan in the vicinity of the PAHS site that day, one that may have been involved in the facilitation of the massacre. This third Volvo was seen to be driven by two women [see eye witness statements: Law, Ashley John, testified 2 days after the event; and Cooper, Paul Anthony; testified 2 days after the event].

Bryant made some really bizarre statements at his interview; so bizarre in fact that perhaps his removal to Seascope that day involved some kind of surreptitiously administered psychotic drug. It has also been suggested that while in custody he experienced psychiatric (or hypnotic) intervention that implanted false and incriminating recollections. Remember also that in terms of the dissenting narrative, Bryant was not supposed to have survived the Seascope fire and, at the time of the interview, had been in solitary confinement for over two months.

He said he stopped a gold BMW at gunpoint at the turn off to Fortescue Bay Road (further north on the Arthur Highway than Seascope) and ordered the driver to get into the boot (of the BMW). He said he also asked a woman who, with her young child, was a passenger in the BMW, to get into his Volvo. He then sped off in the BMW back towards Seascope leaving the Volvo behind. At Seascope, the BMW somehow caughtfire (Bryant couldn't remember starting the fire, but admitted he might have) and he believed the fellow in the boot was incinerated. Bryant was of the opinion that he himself must have also been in the BMW at the time it caught fire and this was how he got burnt. But he also said he was on the other side of the house knocking on the back door when the BMW burst into flame.

The gold BMW

That Bryant believed he had commandeered a gold BMW and locked its driver in the boot to be burnt alive is just too coincidental. Either Bryant did indeed hijack the gold BMW from the PAHS tollbooth or he had been psychologically tampered within a manner to implant false memories. Effective techniques for the implantation of false memory have been known since the early 90s [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Memory_implantation]. Moreover, the testimony of at least three tollbooth witnesses [Cheok, Frida (testified 78 days after the event); Cheok, Nicholas Emmanuel (testified 77 days after the event); and Rabe, Debra Lee (testified same day as the event) strongly suggests the latter scenario (Bryant being implanted with false memories) is the correct one. The following excerpt is from "Mass Murder, Official Killing in Tasmania, Australia" by Keith Noble (p. 552, 2013)], and describes the manner in which the gunman acquired the gold BMW:

The gunman driving some yellow Volvo had a clear road to go by the tollbooth. There was nothing blocking his exit. But he stopped. Why he did is not known. Whether it was pre-planned that he stop, or whether he had received instructions enroute to stop, or whether someone from that gold-coloured BMW flagged him down, or.....

Regardless, the gunman stopped at the tollbooth. The following is from the Witness Statement of Freda/Frida Cheok: "As we were travelling towards the toll gate [sic], I could see two cars ahead and presumed one was going in and the other was coming out. As we approached the toll booth [sic] I saw that one of these cars was a gold-coloured BMW in our lane, facing us and was blocking out [sic] path. It wasn't until we almost reached the toll gate area that I saw the BMW was parked in our [entrance] lane. I also saw a yellow coloured Volvo sedan, which I noticed had a surfboard on the top, parked on the road ahead of us but in the correct [exit] lane, but further back from the BMW.... I would estimate that there was less than a car's length between Debra's car [we were in] and the BMW when we came to a halt."

If there are any other Witness Statements which describe the time before this, this editor has not seen them. Again, why the gunman stopped is not something the DPP has reported. Another confounding fact is that the witness Freda/Frida Cheok, and also her son Nicholas Emmanuel Cheok said that when they arrived and stopped at the tollbooth, two people were seated inside the yellow Volvo, conversing presumably, with the gunman. And as has been stated several times in this book, no person gets inside a vehicle with a gunman whose weapon is visible on the back seat. Whoever those people were in the Volvo, they must have known the gunman personally, or had knowledge about his mass murder plan. The gunman did not stop at the tollbooth because he liked the fancy BMW. He did not skid to a halt and shoot the people who arrived in that BMW. No. He stayed in the Volvo he was driving and it seems that two people got out of the BMW and went and sat with him inside his yellow car. The DPP does not want people to know this because it just ruins the official narrative about a lone-nut gunman driving all over the place killing people here and there and inside the BMW. But it is not the truth. It seems people who arrived in that BMW knew the gunman and went to him. And here it is extremely important to note – those people did not know Martin Bryant and he did not know them. There was no misunderstanding.

From everything this editor has studied, those two people who got into the yellow Volvo with the gunman were Helene Salzmann (she sat on the front passenger seat), and Robert Salzmann (he sat on the rear seat behind the driver – he could have felt the warm barrel of the rifle beside him). The two Salzmans from Ocean Shores, New South Wales. And seat[ed] in the front passenger seat of her BMW, Mary Rose Nixon waited. What was she thinking? What did she think was going to happen? How could this woman who had her own family, her own children, have been involved in this insanity? Did the two Salzmans pressure her? Threaten her?

The man driving her BMW was Russell Pollard from Brunswick Heads. He was a friend of Mary Rose. She probably addressed him by the familiar name Jim. Those who knew him did. Surely he would have driven away if Mary Rose had said: Let's get out of here Jim. But it seems as if she wanted to stay. Did her husband know this side of his wife? Did their children know? (Their daughter Dr. Nixon in Tasmania is one.) What the hell was going on? Don't waste your time looking in official documents. There's nothing about this. Just lies, unproved assertions, and false statements to nail innocent Martin Bryant.

But now it was time. Whatever was said to or with the gunman did not endear the two Salzmans to him. And when Robert Salzman alighted from that yellow Volvo – thinking no one knows what – he stepped off the land of the living. He did breathe a few more times, but his last gasp was just a few moments away. This is what Nicholas Emmanuel Cheok wrote in his Witness Statement: “There was a bit more talking, about ten seconds, between the blonde haired male and the older man and then the blonde haired male lifted up the gun and pointed it at the chest of the older man and something was said...and then I heard a blast...and the older man’s chest just seemed to cave in and he fell to the ground and didn’t move.” Then it got a lot worse. With the witnesses just metres away, and the gunman, with his hair “long below his shoulders” and oblivious to who was watching turned to face Russell Pollard. Had Jim Pollard lost his senses? He saw his friend Robert Salzman get a bullet right into his chest, and given the power of the assault rifle that bullet would have gone right through Salzman. If Mary Rose Nixon said a cautious word to Pollard, we will never know. One person who knew Pollard personally told this editor he was no fool. So what was going on that made Pollard think that he could get the upper hand?

The DPP does not know. The only thing certain then was the .308 round right in the breech ready for Jim, and the person who fired that round was definitely not Martin Bryant. This is what Freda/Frida Cheok saw: “I then saw the man get out of the driver’s seat of the BMW and walk around the front of his car...and go in the direction of the blonde haired man. As the man from the BMW was walking towards him, the blonde haired man then shot this man.... Both these men were shot in the area of their chests, definitely the man from the BMW was shot in the chest because as he laid on the ground I saw a dark patch in the area of his chest.” And what did the son of Freda/Frida Cheok witness?: “The blonde haired male was half turned to us when he shot the second man. I think he shot the second man in the chest area. When the blonde haired male shot both men, he was very close to them. I would say the gun was only inches away from the chest of the second man when he shot him and the gun was right up to the first man’s chest when he shot him.” Readers might think that the two mentioned eye-witnesses, being mother and son, could have influenced each other. Well, it seems not. Here is what the driver of the vehicle they were in said in her Witness Statement: “[H]e shot the person he had been arguing with. The bullet appeared to go through this persons chest, and out his back.... I heard another two shots. I looked again, and the older man from the BMW was on the ground, along with another woman. This woman was on the road between the gunman’s car and the BMW. I’m not sure where she came from. She was wearing a pink, blue and white knitted jumped [sic; should be jumper, a pullover or sweater]. I think he (the gunman) dragged her out of his car [the yellow Volvo], but I am not sure.”

So from three eyewitnesses who were just a few metres away with an unobstructed view of this mini-massacre it is reasonable to conclude the following: i. The gunman was in a yellow Volvo; ii. A man and a woman were inside that Volvo with the gunman; iii. The man, believed to be Robert Salzman got out of the Volvo followed by the gunman; iv. The gunman took his rifle from the back of the Volvo and shot Salzman pointblank through the chest; v. A second man, believed to be Russell/Jim Pollard got out of the BMW and walked to the gunman; vi. The gunman shot Pollard pointblank through the chest; vii. The gunman then dragged the woman from the Volvo and shot her; viii. Then, the gunman either dragged the woman from the BMW and shot her, or shot her in the BMW before dragging her out.

This killing at the fourth crime scene clearly confirms the gunman was a professional killer, probably a psychopath with no conscience. This is not killing you learn how to do and how to remain in absolute control throughout, by shooting at a cardboard target in the bush, which is all Martin Bryant ever did. This killing at the tollbooth, was pointblank killing. Looking people right in their eyes as their chests were blown inside out. No qualms about murdering women – drag ‘em out blow the bitches. When Martin heard about the shooting at Port Arthur, he asked if anyone was hurt. It was not some clever reply. Martin was not clever. He doesn’t have the brains to be clever. Just as he didn’t have the mind and the will to methodically murder four adults at the historic site tollbooth, just after murdering three, two of whom were children, down along Jetty Road. And all that just after murdering 24 and wounding 23 at and near the Broad Arrow Café.

As can be seen, the manner in which the gunman acquired the gold BMW is particularly damning for the official narrative. In fact, we are looking here at a black swan moment for the prosecution’s case against Martin Bryant. The official story is certainly undermined in terms of the lone nut with a gun idea. The Salzmans knew the gunman, were not afraid of him, negotiated with him, and had safe opportunity to completely disarm him but didn’t.

However, there is even more to be told about the tollbooth shootings. There is firm evidence to suggest that very shortly after death, these four deceased people were searched and stripped of any incriminating material. The following is from “A Gunsmith’s Notebook on Port Arthur” by Stewart Beattie (6th edition May 2006, South Wood Press, pp. 207-215)

Bingara “Bolt from the Blue”

After considering all of the evidence I have to hand, I can say with certainty Const Garry Whittle did have time and opportunity to do more than check for vital signs in the case of Jim Pollard, deceased on Jetty Road, lying near the yellow Volvo abandoned in the outbound lane at the Port Arthur tollbooth around 3.20 pm. But after careful consideration of the statement by the NSW Police Constable, Justin Noble, I believe Whittle may have been relegated to a more junior role at the tollbooth, as you may come to understand as this segment unfolds.

When two colleagues, Mrs Wendy Scurr and Andrew MacGregor, visited Inverell in March 2001, as guests who both addressed the audience at the Inverell Forum on that Friday evening of the 23rd, a female (Miss Julie Buttler) who operates grazing interests near Bingara, had a friend rise to her feet during question time and ask a question that hit like a bolt from the blue! It was claimed her friend had information delivered to her by her local police, which proved beyond a shadow of doubt that the official account of events that day were fallacious. Later Miss Butler related to me her extraordinary experiences regarding this time segment of the massacre as it related to her friend Jim Pollard.

On Sunday 28th April 1996, Julie Butler had arranged for local Bingara Police to travel out to the property and meet with her to clear-up a totally unrelated stock matter. At the pre-arranged time of 2.00pm, Julie and her mother sat in their vehicle waiting at the agreed rendezvous; but the police did not arrive. Our rural people are very patient and understanding, and so the pair sat quietly chatting, and listening to the car radio. [Two] hours later, and as the familiar theme began, heralding the four o'clock radio news, Julie alighted from the vehicle to greet the local Bingara "cop" she knew quite well.

Now the Butler property is twenty three and a half miles - or a forty minute drive over gravel roads - away from Bingara in Northern NSW. With the handshakes and an apology for his delayed arrival done with, and before Julie had time to begin with the formal matters at hand, her uniformed policeman friend in serious tones told her that she should listen carefully to what he was about to say. Continuing, he explained that before leaving Bingara Police Station his superior had instructed him, in words to the effect, "Don't breathe a word of what we have just learned to Miss Butler at your meeting today".

Obviously, the policeman had agonised over his superior's instruction as he drove the forty minutes over the dusty gravel road to the Butler property – after all, back in 1996 there were a few country cops left that believed as members of the constabulary, they enjoyed the trust and good friendship of the people of their community built on by them fulfilling their obligations to them. So, choosing his words carefully, the Bingara policeman told Julie to make sure she watched the evening TV news services, as there had been "a serious incident at Port Arthur in Tasmania that would affect her directly". Cleverly, the local "cop" had reached a compromise position that appeased both parties. Julie Butler's thoughts leaped instantly to the only person she knew who was definitely at that time holidaying in Tasmania: Russell James Pollard, her very dear and long time good friend...

...After having discussed the matters at length with Miss Butler on several occasions, and considering all information very carefully, I believe the facts speak for themselves. Bingara Police were aware of Miss Butler's friendship with Jim Pollard. So it then becomes obvious that via police communications and sometime between 1450 hrs and 1520 hrs (3.20pm) or at least some 40 plus minutes before 1600 hrs, Bingara Police at the Bingara Police Station had learned very shortly after Russell James Pollard had been shot in a shooting incident at Port Arthur in Tasmania that he was deceased.

It was at 1600hrs (4.00pm), that documents confirm the arrival through the tollbooth of the first Tasmania Police officer, Const. Peter Hessman to the Historic Site. But he had no opportunity to establish a preliminary identification of Mr. Pollard as he didn't break his journey there at the tollbooth. The local Bingara policeman's subsequent reaction to the information received would seem to suggest the Tasmanian informant also curiously exhibited a primary desire to confirm the nature and/or extent of the friendship that existed between the deceased and this local friend Miss Butler.

Police cannot notify next of kin (or friends for that matter) of any death, before the deceased is legally declared "dead" by a medical practitioner. So here we have a situation whereby someone had opportunity and reason to establish the identity of Jim Pollard lying there on Jetty Road near the tollbooth and pass the information to police at Bingara, by way of an inquiry, rather than a notification meant for the deceased next of kin. A prominent notation in Jim Pollard's address book had to be the key which initiated this action, but the question remains, "As Pollard's next of kin had no association with Bingara, was that action triggered by a pressing need by some unidentified person to confirm the identity of persons noted prominently in Jim Pollard's notebook?" Interestingly, none of Jim Pollard's immediate family, including his son Phillip, his brother Keith, twin sister or his wife Dawn (from whom he was separated), have ever received any of Jim Pollard's personal effects, which included:

1. A valuable gold wrist watch,
2. His wallet - and importantly,
3. His address book.

The Police Training Video clearly shows Mr. Pollard's body, furthest from the camera on the western shoulder of Jetty Road, wearing dark sports slacks and a white shirt. His upper body is hidden from the camera and so I cannot say if he is wearing his gold watch or not. It is also interesting that Russell James Pollard was one of the last victims to be formally identified, when his son Phillip flew to Hobart from the mainland, but I can also state he was the first deceased victim to have interstate friends know of his death. Recently, it was claimed his next of kin had never received a death certificate, a claim at time of writing I'm unable to confirm. Nevertheless:

1. What became of Mr. Pollard's valueless (but to the family sentimentally priceless) address book?
2. What happened to Mr. Pollard's wallet and personal papers?
3. What happened to Mr. Pollard's valuable gold wrist watch?
4. Why have the family not received his personal effects?
5. Who identified Jim Pollard as deceased and so made the call to Bingara Police?
6. Has a death certificate for Mr. Pollard been issued, and who signed it?

My inquiries always come back to the same question: "Who among those we know of on the Historic Site at the time had opportunity and reason to remove all of the personal items from the deceased Jim Pollard and, using information contained in his address book, to then make inquires of police in Bingara that alerted a friend that he had been involved in a fatal incident at Port Arthur?" I shall now try to address this question.

Let us look at the information we have accessed, which deals with the tollbooth incident in relation to the movements affecting the original occupants of the BMW. The first witness to mention "a gold BMW" on Jetty Road was Debra Buckley. Debra and her husband, Thomas, "at about 1.45 pm" had passed through the tollbooth in their red Commodore Holden Avis rent-a-car and began the decent on Jetty Road that led to the Broad Arrow Café car park. The couple noticed "a large group of people" jogging across the grassy area about 100m away, when a male beyond a gold coloured BMW in front of them, yelled out to them something like, "Don't go down there. There's someone with a gun". Thomas immediately began reversing their car back up Jetty Road and then turned about (probably at the Church Road intersection), driving back up towards the tollbooth. Debra Buckley tells us the "gold coloured BMW which was (had been) directly ahead ... [was also] reversing and turning to head back in the same direction." So the "gold coloured BMW" in question, had also gone through the tollbooth, down Jetty Road then

reversed and turned around to retrace its journey to the tollbooth and park in the incoming or wrong lane – so providing a clear run for any vehicle leaving the site.

Thomas Buckley went to Aileen Kingston in the tollbooth to be told she was aware of the shooting and that the police had been called. Debra Buckley also tells us she then had a short exchange with a male in the gold BMW who had dark complexion “perhaps of Greek extraction” she says; this was Robert Salzmann and she conveyed to him the seriousness of the situation. She then turned and saw the gunman down Jetty Road, who was in the process of killing Mrs Mikac and her two daughters. At that point, Debra and Thomas Buckley abandoned their Commodore and left the area on foot, so they leave our story.

The BMW was stationary, parked wrongly in the incoming lane, just beyond the pedestrian crossing at the northern extent of the tollbooth traffic divide, so blocking all traffic attempting to enter the Historic Site via the tollbooth's left hand lane, but at the same time giving an unobstructed exit to the gunman about to depart the Historic Site. From this point in time there is a few moments gap in witnesses' statements from when the gunman regained the Volvo on Jetty Road and drove the 60 or so metres up to where he stopped, still facing north in the outbound or correct lane, directly opposite the parked gold BMW. Consequently, we are unaware of the movements if any, of the four occupants of the BMW sedan in those next crucial moments.

However, the continuity of the story is taken up by the three occupants of a red Ford Corsair as they arrive to enter the Site by the tollbooth. Debra Rabe, at the time worked at St John Ambulance headquarters in Hobart. On that Sunday, Debra, with her two-year-old niece Ashley Rabe, 'a work colleague' from Adelaide, Freda Cheok, and her (Freda's) son, Nicholas, were all enjoying a day trip to the area from her home in Hobart. Debra was at the wheel when they pulled up about a car's length from a “gold” coloured BMW parked in the wrong lane and blocking their entry path. They tell us that a well presented gentleman wearing glasses, ‘in his sixties’ was seated in the driver's seat of the gold BMW. This was Jim Pollard. Beside Pollard, was seated a female who was waving Debra to “go back”. This was Mary Rose ‘Rosemary’ Nixon.

Nicholas Cheok was seated in the front passenger seat beside Debra, with his mother Freda Cheok in the rear seat behind him. Nicholas' attention was focused on a yellow Volvo which had a surfboard on a roof rack he saw parked facing north in the northbound or outgoing lane, directly opposite the gold coloured BMW and therefore in his estimation “about two sedan car lengths away” from Debra Rabe's car. The witness goes on to tell us a person with long hair was at the wheel of this “older style car”, a yellow Volvo, and a “short haired female in her fifties” was seated beside the driver; this we now know to be Helene Salzmann. With the BMW's female passenger (Rosemary Nixon) still remaining seated in the front passenger seat and continuing to wave them back, Nicholas states that he then saw a man alight from the rear compartment of the driver's side of the yellow Volvo sedan: he was “probably in his mid sixties and ... of average height”. This male was Robert Salzmann, who remained standing beside the Volvo while the driver, a male with long blonde hair alighted. Nicholas Cheok continues by telling us that from the body language of these two males, he could tell they were arguing. He further states that the gunman turned to look towards the people in the BMW, then as he walked around the front and down the left side of the yellow Volvo to its rear, he (the witness) “distinctly remembers he looked directly at [the witnesses in the red Ford Corsair]”, before the Volvo obstructed his view as to what the male was now doing. Importantly though, Nicholas did not see the boot-lid raised up, and therefore I can confidently state the blonde haired male went into the passenger side rear compartment, not the boot, as Nicholas had an unobstructed view if the boot lid of the Volvo had been raised.

The blonde haired male then walked back around the rear of the Volvo carrying two long arms (one on a sling over his shoulder) and returned to again argue with the male still standing beside the Volvo. Now this last point becomes quite critical in arriving at a sound conclusion to this segment. For if these witnesses' [statements by Rabe, Cheok and Cheok are corroborative] recounts of events are correct, and I see no reason to doubt the statements, clearly the two passengers must have entered the Volvo without duress or force of arms. Even more importantly, Robert (Salzmann) had been seated on the same bench seat beside two long arms! In light of Debra Buckley informing the occupants of the gold BMW of the shootings and the volley of shots that confirmed her story just 60m away down Jetty Road, one must then ponder these three questions:

1. Why did Robert and Helene Salzmann enter the gunman's Volvo?
2. How was the gunman able to feel so comfortable as to allow a male (hostage?) to sit behind him and beside 2 rifles he'd just used to murder 15 people minutes earlier? And,
3. Why didn't Robert Salzmann remove the firearms as he alighted and really intervene in the massacre?

The answers to these questions seem so very obvious...

We are then told that as little as ten seconds passed at this point before the blonde haired male raised the gun to inline with Robert Salzmann's chest with the muzzle very close to his body and fired, and the man fell to the ground and did not move. I can positively state the Police Training Video shows the body of Robert Salzmann lying stretched out on his back, face up and parallel to the driver's side and close to the yellow Volvo, which is parked right over the pedestrian crossing at the northern extent of the tollbooth divide, facing north, his head to the northern extent of the white lines in the pedestrian crossing (the position shown in the PTV tape is entirely consistent with Nicholas Cheok's statement).

At this point, Pollard alighted from the driver's seat of the BMW, walking around the front of the BMW and approached this armed male who'd just shot and killed his “old army buddy” Robert Salzmann standing beside the Volvo. Upon reaching the gunman, Pollard was said to utter but a few words to him, before the gunman again raised the rifle (a .30 cal firearm) and with the muzzle again close to his chest and the gunman looking back towards the occupants of the red Ford Corsair, he shot Jim Pollard dead. Contrary to what has been published in *The Daily Telegraph* (attributed to his son Phillip) on April 22, 2006 at page 61, and the citation for the bravery award to Robert Salzmann, the claims [for] both Salzmann and Pollard attempting to disarm the gunman near the tollbooth cannot be sustained when all the witness statements are considered.

Bullet damage: both the left hand rear window and the quarter pane of Martin Bryant's Volvo abandoned at the tollbooth were bullet damaged.

Returning now to the witnesses' accounts of the incident we find that while Debra Rabe "casually put her car into reverse," Nicholas watched the gunman walk around the front of the Volvo for the second time, open the front passenger door and stand behind that open door. He then reached into the car for the female Helene Salzmänn and after the red Ford Corsair had moved no more than "two car lengths" the woman was dragged to her feet and shot beside the rear passenger side door of the Volvo, which accounts for the bullet damage only ever referred to by the DPP indifferently. With Debra Rabe's attention now solely focused on removing the vehicle from her boxed-in position in the queue (as another car had stopped behind them), the gunman was still under observation by her passengers. Freda Cheok tells us that as Debra reversed into a space (on the eastern side of the road), and looking to her left, she saw the blonde haired male gunman trying to drag Helene Salzmänn, who he'd already shot as she was "crouched down on the ground", around and across the road in front of the Volvo at its driver's side front corner.

Rosemary Nixon still remained seated in the front of the gold BMW as Debra drove away fast from the scene. At this point another witness arrives on the scene. Graham Sutherland, his wife Stephanie and two sons were in a V6 Maroon Magna sedan. As they approached the tollbooth, Mr Sutherland stated he saw the tan coloured BMW still parked facing him, and the Volvo still parked in the outgoing lane, both "slightly in front of the toll booth facing towards [him]". Sutherland goes on to state, "to the driver's side I saw a body laying on the road way, I think face down." This had to be Rosemary Nixon. He also stated of the BMW, "the driver's side door was open" and continuing he states, "The body was completely out of the vehicle. The feet of the body were close to the driver's door and the head was pointed on a 45 degree angle down towards the Historic Site. I think there may have been a white top on this person/body with fawn trousers. I though (sic) this person was male."

Now, when the above accounts are compared with the court transcript it becomes obvious there are some problems here. As a consequence, to this investigator the positions of the bodies of Jim Pollard, Helene Salzmänn, and Mary Rose Nixon as shown in the Police Training Video and the account as provided in the court Transcript are not entirely consistent with that which is indicated by witness statements.

During this video clip captured on Monday 29th, the camera does not pan; it just looks west, across and at right angles to the carriageway, with the three cadavers spread out across the sealed surface.... The body of Jim Pollard seems to be partly off the sealed surface, feet towards the camera and head obscured, wearing dark shoes, dark slacks and a white shirt. I believe the position of this.... body strongly suggests it may have been moved at some time between when the victim was shot and the video was captured, as the position is inconsistent with that established by several of the witness statements...

...Now to quickly recap briefly the forgoing segment: For those who ran this psycho-political exercise it becomes obvious that the tollbooth was a critical area of usual entry to the primary field of their operation, an area I would suggest they would most definitely had to have ensured some form of observation and or control over. For instance, if an armed policeman had inadvertently entered the primary field of operation a most adverse and exposed outcome may have unfolded – and they could not allow that to happen. So yet other covert agents would have to have been allocated the role of controlling the tollbooth area. Who were those controllers?

When the inexplicable actions of Robert and Helene Salzmänn are considered, and indeed the actions of their companion, Jim Pollard, I'm forced to abandon my earlier held belief that Jim Pollard was innocently caught up in a covert action on the part of his hosts. It seems yet again the body count of covert agents has risen considerably; is it now probable that 4 or possibly even 6 covert agents died by gunshot while on the job that day? This I might add has been an unexpected development for this author...

...When combined, the evidence surrounding the forgoing is strengthened considerably I believe when one considers events proximate to the missing personal effects of Jim Pollard in conjunction with the actions of what Deputy Commissioner, Richard McCreadie, described quaintly as, "a holidaying police officer from New South Wales [who] stepped forward and began marshalling all the survivors and bringing some organisation and control to the scene."

I can do a little better than a seemingly cautious Police Commissioner here and the officer is definitely not Const Garry Whittle either. Surely his profile would have to be that of a person whose covert role (like those of at least another eight to ten or more persons involved) must be concealed from the public. We also have this officer's statement, a real tome that took him a full working day to compose. The first person who fits all the criteria of that culprit is a Bureau of Crime Intelligence (BCI) officer, who while simply identified as a NSW policeman on holidays, nevertheless is I believe none other than Justin Noble whose 8 plus page statement, to the unwary would seem to exhibit a policeman with extraordinary powers of recall and little else. But the document in fact oozes intelligence! One crime scene of significance he must have visited but so noticeably mentions almost casually was the tollbooth. Why? Contrary to the prescribed police protocol, this police officer alone didn't provide his statement to his superiors at his station upon his return supposedly to NSW, but instead he supplied his voluminous statement, compiled in various places around Hobart, to colleagues in BCI head office in Hobart. His actions, I would opinion, confirm Justin Noble as a BCI officer and that would go some way to explaining why his rank is never mentioned by anyone including Comm. McCreadie, even the make and model of his car remain concealed although I can state it was Victorian registered. Inadvertently, his rank is given as "constable" in the bravery awards citation. BCI is a rather strange department, housed among state police, but federal in its operation, just as the Federal Police are. In this case, though, why would a NSW policeman be driving his own vehicle on holidays in Tasmania, when his 'own vehicle' carried Victorian registration of OEY- 903? Was he actually stationed in Melbourne and if so what was his special assignment; Port Arthur?

If in fact Justin is a BCI officer and he was the culprit who removed the personal effects from the deceased Jim Pollard, then this would go some way to explaining why numerous people - determined to conceal their identity incidentally - were suddenly exhibiting heightened interest in anyone listed in the address book of Jim Pollard for months after, to the tune of upwards of possibly 50 phone calls to one such individual alone in reference to Jim Pollard.

Before and after the fact

There is plenty of speculation among investigators as to how and by whom the shooting was planned and financed. Some suggest that because the original target might have been the US retirees, there was involvement by those

wanting traction on gun control in that country. This is an astonishing assertion to anyone who has not engaged with the evidence. Researchers have come to the belief that there were elements within the Tasmania Police, the Tasmanian government, Victoria Police, NSW Police and Federal authorities who were in the know (to various degrees) after the fact, and some before, and who all engaged in the cover up and framing of Martin Bryant.

As already mentioned, there was no SLR (FN-FAL) used at the PAHS. The damaged SLR found in the ruins of Seascap was a throwdown weapon, as indeed was the damaged AR-15 also found there. The damaged AR-15 had had its breach (action) blown open. Tasmania Police ballistics 'expert' Gerard Dutton claimed the rifle action was blown up by a faulty round that Martin Bryant was just unlucky enough to have purchased. This 'hot' factory round explanation for the damage to the AR-15 is clearly false. Ammunition manufacturers claim such a situation to be so highly improbable as to be described as virtually impossible. Modern rifle ammunition is manufactured in huge batches. Powder burn rate is carefully matched to case capacity for optimal performance meaning that factory loads are usually filled to about 95% capacity, leaving only 5% available for an accidental overload. The potential is for perhaps a 5-10,000psi pressure spike, which may cause a primer cup failure, or an expanded primer pocket or a difficult case extraction due to case head expansion; but modern rifle actions are proofed to much more than that. The AR-15/M16 platform is one of the most widely produced, most tried and tested, modern rifle actions ever made. The 5.56mm NATO cartridge generates about 50,000 psi peak pressure in a rifle that can handle more than twice that without giving way. To explode any modern rifle action requires a massive overload with faster burning powder (like pistol powder), which in turn requires expert knowledge, as well as access to reloading equipment and materials. Moreover, if such a failure were to occur while the rifle were in use, the shooter would probably be seriously, if not fatally, injured. This narrative therefore asserts that the damaged AR-15 was made unusable prior to being planted in the Seascap ruins after the fire. Both rifles were damaged in order to prevent ballistic comparison with spent projectiles recovered from the PAHS.

By process of elimination, some researchers have expressed the opinion that the AR-15 rifle was blown up prior to being placed in the ruins by Gerard Dutton himself. The rifle was found inside the fire zone but with only superficial damage to its plastic parts and nylon webbing sling. They argue that, given the public record timeframe, it had to be Dutton who put the AR-15 in the ruins. No one else had opportunity to do so. Whether this is true or not, the damaged AR-15 is another undeniable black swan for the prosecution's case against Martin Bryant.

Bryant's car was left at the PAHS tollbooth. The blue sports bag containing the bloodied knife was left in the café. The shooter took the black bag with him as he left the café and placed this bag in the boot of Bryant's Volvo [see witness statements: Cole, J G (testified 36 days after the event) and Godfrey, J (testified 39 days after the incident)], not necessarily the Volvo he had arrived in, by the way. The fact that there were two bags, these being the outer, larger black bag, and the smaller blue sports bag similar to the one Bryant owned, is clear proof that the shooter was following a pre-arranged procedure to set Bryant up for the shootings. Bryant's passport was also supposedly found in his car as was his shotgun and the two SLR magazines. 'Off duty' NSW policeman, Justin Mark Noble, who just happened to be on site at the time of the shootings and whose highly suspect actions immediately afterwards suggest he was implicated, claimed to have discovered these things [see witness statement: Noble, Justin Mark, testified 2 days after the event]. Bryant's video camera, which had to disappear shortly afterwards because the shooter had handled it without gloves, was left on the café table alongside the blue bag. The remains of the shooter's meal and his drinking cup also disappeared for obvious reasons. The neglect and destruction of potentially viable evidence was far too systematic and complete to be accidental.

The only witness at Port Arthur who knew Bryant (and who had actually known him from childhood) said the shooter was not him [see witness statement (below): Laycock, J C, testified 12 days after the event]. At least three other people who eyeballed the shooter at close range said they believed the shooter was not Bryant [see witness statements: Collyer, Graham Derek (testified 10 days after the event); and Godfrey, John (testified 39 days after the event); and Scurr, W (as well as an article written by Mrs Scurr entitled "My experiences at Port Arthur", published in "Deceit and Terrorism – Port Arthur" by Andrew McGregor (2001-2004)].

On this Sunday the 28th April 1996, I did not recognise the male as Martin BRYANT. The person I saw shooting appeared to be in their low twenties, about 5'10" tall, it was impossible to determine his build, (the coat was shapeless). His hair stood out, it was blonde, I thought it was bleached blonde and possibly a female. His hair was shoulder length. His walking appeared to be mannish.

The youths in the red car returned from the bush and they left the scene.

The blonde headed person I saw at the toll gate is definitely the same blonde headed person I saw shoot the woman in the white car at the General Store.

[J C LAYCOCK]

[L F JONES]
Sergeant No 1307 12.15 pm 10/5/96

Seascope

At Seascope, the two local police arrived and parked on the road outside but were soon being shot at. While one shot hit the road near a car, most went over their heads, clearly not trying to hit them, and they may or may not have known that; their actions earlier in the day when they were supposedly sent on that wild goose chase to the other side of the peninsula are somewhat fishy in terms of the timeframe and completely uncorroborated. They may have possibly been responsible for getting Bryant to Seascope (but that is more likely to have been the work of "Tiger"). The BMW was well alight when they arrived. A Tasmania Police SOG officer, Andrew Mark Fogarty, was there to tell them about wounded people from the road shootings at the "Fox and Hounds" up the road. One of them went to assist. The question is, of course, what was Fogarty doing there so soon? Some researchers have expressed the belief that he had just thrown an incendiary device into the back seat of the BMW. They also believe that Pears was still locked in the boot when the car caught fire. (It has never been officially admitted where Pears' body was found. The official narrative says he was handcuffed to furniture in the house. These handcuffs have never been produced. Bryant said he had never owned any and it seems they are completely fictional).

Because Fogarty was on the scene so inexplicably early, it has been suggested that he may have been responsible for getting Bryant to Seascope. Furthermore, it is also claimed by these researchers that in the morning Fogarty would set fire to the house after the shooters had melted away in the night leaving a drugged Bryant to die in the fire.

Before the main SOG force arrived (minus their top man Dyson, who was conspicuously absent throughout the whole operation, but whom many dissenting researchers believe was actually inside Seascope during the siege), two of the police saw a dark haired woman (only one of these policemen identified the person as female) being chased around the yard, and another heard high pitched screaming coming from the back of the cottage [see witness statements: Hyland P B (testimony not dated); Whittle, G T (testimony not dated); Allen, P J (testimony not dated)]. One of the policemen asked for permission to shoot the assailant. Permission was apparently twice denied, presumably by Fogarty, over police radio, other people listening in hearing the words, "Don't shoot! This is the way it has to happen." After the fire, Sally Martin's body was found in the ruins. The official narrative says she was shot, but the evidence is that she died from multiple blows to the back of her head. She had grey hair, but at that time of day it may have appeared dark. She was the only victim apart from Pears and Bryant who was not shot, although bullet fragments in her body were apparently mentioned in the autopsy report.

The house was eventually surrounded by 400 local and interstate police, who were of the firm opinion that there were multiple shooters in the house. Indeed there were. Three kilometres down the road, the PAHS was left unsecured by police until about 7.30 pm, when three shots were fired from behind the tollbooth by one of the agents to signal the all clear (and to further alarm the people there). While the survivors at the PAHS huddled in terror at the sound of these three shots, the police were finishing a BBQ about 500 metres from Seascope. When armed police did eventually arrive at the PAHS and secure the site, it was a full six hours after the shooting had begun (absolutely inexplicable and unforgivable).

Someone in Seascope both initiated and answered many phone calls up to about 9.00pm with the Victoria Police negotiator, Terry McCarthy, and, even though it is thought it may have sometimes been Bryant speaking (by no means a proven fact), it is unlikely it was him who initiated any calls. Officially, these transcripts (many of the original recordings went missing) were all of Bryant talking to the negotiator; however, the conversations clearly indicate the person/s calling himself "Jamie" displayed at times a good knowledge of SOG weaponry, particularly night scopes. The tenor of these exchanges is often not indicative of a low IQ inexperienced person like Bryant. McCarthy expressed the opinion that Bryant (if it was indeed Bryant) "seemed as if he was acting a role." Also, while Bryant was apparently talking, shots could be heard in the background (transcribed as coughs but digitally analysed on the surviving recordings as gun reports).

During the early morning, the gunman and his controller melted away into the darkness, probably extracted by boat, Seascope backing onto Long Bay and the siege not covering the area behind the house. At 8.35am, Bryant emerged from the blazing building with third degree burns to his left side and back. He had been lying on his face in a drugged stupor and the pain of being burnt had awoken him. There were no burns to his face or any other part of his body. He is reported to have come out and gone back in, trying to remove furniture from the building. He said incomprehensible things as he was arrested such as wanting to know if his girlfriend Petra Willmot was safe. When he was first visited by Petra in gaol, the conversation was monitored by a prison officer who said that Bryant's first question to Petra was about his house. He wanted to know if it had burnt down.

This narrative asserts that the house was intentionally set on fire by the police. At that stage, they were not to know the hostages were dead, but they obviously did. Even after Bryant was arrested, the house was allowed to burn to the ground, despite the fact the fire brigade was in attendance. The burning of both the car and the house was blatantly a means of eliminating evidence. It was suggested that the possibility of exploding ammunition made fighting the fire too hazardous, but this is a furphy. Uncontained cartridges (outside a rifle chamber) do not explode with much force and have been assessed as relatively harmless in quite a few publications. For example, see:
<https://my.firefighternation.com/forum/topics/exploding-ammunition-is-this>

Trial by media

Bryant's own house was broken into the night of the siege (before the morning of his arrest) and his (in the case of the Australian newspaper, digitally enhanced with demonic eyes) photo, the original taken from his home, was on the front page of Tuesday morning's newspapers, on the streets all over the country, including illegally in the Hobart Mercury [see ABC Media Watch 6/5/95: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6sj3niOGTGI>]. There were another two raids on his home over the next few days and only on the final raid were found stashes of guns and ammunition (no surprise). His assets were taken from him by a special act of Tasmanian Parliament long before he was convicted, precluding any privately funded defence.

Petra Willmot had been with Martin for four days preceding the incident. She said she had not seen any change in Martin's behaviour. She had never seen any firearms, or ammunition, or handcuffs at his house, and neither had his mother (Bryant freely admitted to having kept his guns in his car – police interview transcript 1/5: see Wikileaks: https://wikileaks.org/wiki/Martin_Bryant_complete_interview). Petra and Martin had done things together and were going to do things together. She described him as a decent kind person. It is difficult to assign any motive to Bryant for the shootings, although the Tasmania Police, the Tasmanian DPP and other Tasmanian government officials tried their best to do so.

Furthermore, there has never been an inquest into the deaths of those 35 people. John Howard echoed Jack Ruby (the murderer of JFK patsy Lee Harvey Oswald) when he said he wanted to save the people of Tasmania from the pain of an inquest, and even though it was not strictly his call, an inquest was the last thing the Tasmanian government wanted either. Just the issue of the faulty gift shop door was enough of a disincentive there.

Bryant was tried and found guilty by media long before he supposedly confessed. The police released hugely contrived, erroneous and damning statements about him including one about an arsenal of weaponry in his car that day and also at his house. The press statement said 43 weapons were transported by Bryant to Seascapes and found in the ruins, when in fact the remains of about six guns were found, only one of which (a Chinese manufactured SKS 7.62 x 39mm carbine) would have been plausibly usable before the fire. The others were missing parts and some had been kept by the Martins as decorative pieces. The SKS belonged to neither the Martins nor Bryant.

The outraged national public lapped it up and demanded retribution. Bryant spent at least three, possibly up to five months in solitary confinement, was subject to psychiatric intervention, and had three dodgy police appointed lawyers before finally changing his plea to guilty. This of course had to happen. There could never have been a successful prosecution. Basically, there has never been any objectively sustainable forensic evidence against him. Prior to changing his plea, however, the Tasmanian Director of Public Prosecutions and the Tasmania Police went to great lengths to build a case against Bryant. Witnesses whose evidence was in any way exculpatory were written to and advised they would not be needed in court. Those who were thought to be useful were asked to identify Bryant's photograph months after the exact same photograph had been stolen from his house on the night of the shootings, months after that photograph had been published across the nation (including Tasmania), and after months of having their memories compromised by intense media coverage centred on this photograph, the only colour photograph on the whole police photo board in fact. Bryant was never identified face-to-face in any police line up.

This dissenting narrative is based on eye witness accounts, the public record, the police time line, audiovisual records and a great deal of inductive common sense. The official narrative is supported by nothing apart from Bryant's so-called confession and some very bizarre statements at an interview after more than two months in solitary.

If there is one simple fact that demonstrates the contrived inadequacy of the police response to this terrible event it is that no attempt was ever made to close the Eagle Hawk Neck Bridge and thereby quarantine the entire Tasman Peninsula to all road traffic to and from.

Bryant's Guilty Plea

Bryant did not actually confess to anything. He simply changed his plea. However, it should never be forgotten that Bryant was a ward of the state. At no time while in custody was his guardian present. Therefore Bryant's guilty plea is not legally valid.

Remember that Bryant protested his innocence for many months in the face of unrelenting duress from the state while in solitary confinement. His police appointed lawyers did not defend him. They were working for the other side and they put him under extreme pressure to change his plea. Just how extreme this pressure was is demonstrated by this extract from his mother Carleen Bryant's Book "My Story" (2010):

"On one occasion, Avery [John Avery, the third and last of Martin Bryant's police appointed lawyers, who was later struck off and gaoled himself for misappropriation of client funds] offered to take me to visit Martin.After arriving at the prison we were taken to Martin's cell. I soon discovered why I was there. On his previous visits, Avery had been unsuccessful in persuading Martin to plead guilty. He thought that if I could encourage Martin to change his plea, perhaps something could be done for him.

"The general sentiment at the time was that since the perpetrator had been apprehended it would help ease the suffering of the survivors if they did not have to experience the pain of a public criminal trial. The media followed this sentiment with their reporting and I was under great emotional pressure to convince Martin to plead guilty. It was believed that a trial would cause undue suffering to those who had already suffered enough. To this day I am ashamed to say that I told Martin that he would never see Lindy or me again unless he pleaded guilty."

Summary of arguments

1. Circumstantial precursors, being the mortuary van, the embalming box, the journalists conference, the medical conference, the PAHS senior staff taken off site, the NFA ready to go, and the American retirees tour.
2. Bryant was positively identified at Forcett at a time that would make it impossible for him to have killed David Martin before 11.00am.
3. Sally Martin was not shot. She was bashed to death.
4. Lerner said he met Bryant at 1.05pm and spoke with him for several minutes. This makes it impossible for Bryant to have been with the two women (with their broken-down van) at that time and highly unlikely he could have made it to the tollbooth by 1.15pm.
5. Bryant had no mechanical expertise and was never known to do drugs. Even if he had wanted the marijuana, it is unlikely he would have had a \$50 note.
6. Both a shotgun and a 7.62mm were used in the café. The shotgun wound was positively identified by an experienced paramedic and there were 7.62mm cases and spilt ammunition on the café floor.
7. Twelve witnesses described the gunman's shoulder-length hair and seven saw below-shoulder-length hair. No one described the hair as wavy.
8. The blue sports bag was not long enough to contain an SLR or an AR-15 rifle. However, the prosecution attempted to get around this by claiming the shooter used a collapsible stock AR-15 SP-1 carbine (found in the Seascope ruins), but witnesses drew a rifle with a non-collapsible stock.
9. The damaged SLR (found in the ruins) had a 'G' serial number indicating European manufacture. The two magazines supposedly found in Bryant's car had imperial specs.
10. The shooter used his weapons right-handedly.
11. There was another yellow Volvo positively identified within the PAHS at the time of the shootings. It was driven by two women who behaved suspiciously.
12. The manner in which the gunman acquired the gold BMW completely destroys the lone nut with a gun scenario put forward by the prosecution. Clearly, the gunman had accomplices. Three corroborative witness statements indicate the Salzmanns were involved with the gunman. They knew him, were not afraid of him, negotiated with him and had easy opportunity to totally disarm him (but didn't). In fact, all four occupants of the BMW were somehow involved. This is undeniably a black swan demolition of the prosecution case against Martin Bryant. It cannot possibly be argued differently.
13. The Bingara story adds credence to the above point. Russell (Jim) Pollard was officially involved in the conspiracy.
14. The only person who had known Martin Bryant (and who had known him from childhood), Jim Laycock, "did not recognise the male as Martin Bryant". At least three other people said they didn't think the shooter was Bryant. Many people described the shooter as someone in his late teens or early twenties. Bryant was 28 at the time. He had a smooth complexion. The shooter was described as having a noticeably marred complexion as if he had had acne or the like at some stage.
15. There appears to be no defensible explanation for SOG Officer Fogarty being the first Tasmania Police person at Seascope.
16. It still hasn't been admitted where Glenn Pears' body was found.
17. The DPP was unable to produce the handcuffs. It is unlikely they would have been burnt. S & W cuffs are of high quality steel manufacture.
18. Police were of the opinion that there were multiple shooters in the cottage. Analysis of sound recordings indicate gunshots while Bryant was supposedly speaking with McCarthy.
19. Police were denied permission to shoot at the person chasing the woman. Who was this woman if it wasn't Sally Martin?
20. It took six hours for armed police to arrive at the PAHS. Only after three "all clear" shots were fired did they arrive.
21. Bryant had third degree burns to his back and one side. This is not indicative of injury to a person who was conscious and who started the fire.
22. The 'hot' factory round explanation for the damage to the AR-15 is clearly false. There is no other explanation for the damaged AR-15 other than after-the-fact planting of evidence, and as such it is an undeniable black swan for the prosecution case against Martin Bryant.
23. Bryant was only ever identified months after the shootings from a photograph that had been published across Australia, including Tasmania.
24. The Tasmania Police did not attempt to close the bridge connecting the peninsula to the mainland, something so very logical to do and something that could have been very easily done.
25. There has never been an inquest into the deaths of 35 people and the wounding of a further 20.
26. Petra Willmot described Bryant as a decent kind person. She had been with him for four months and the affair was going well. It was a good time in Bryant's life. He had never been known to express any animosity towards anyone (except, apparently, a neighbour's wayward cat).

Conclusion

Despite the political platitudes, it is truly amazing that there has never been an inquest into the murder of thirty-five people and the wounding of a further twenty at and near the Port Arthur Historic Site on Sunday 28th April 1996. Yet, even so, there is hard evidence to support the view that the conviction of Martin Bryant as the Port Arthur gunman was a gross and wilful miscarriage of justice.

Furthermore, at the time Bryant was a ward of the state, having been assessed as psychologically incapable of managing his own affairs, yet his guardian, the Public Trustee, was never present at any of the proceedings leading to his incarceration, and this fact alone appears to make the manner of his conviction illegal.

It appears that every official effort was made to ignore, neglect, discard or destroy potentially viable forensic evidence during and after the Port Arthur massacre. The official narrative therefore relies on a questionable photographic identification process conducted some months after the event, and Bryant's own words spoken after months in solitary confinement without genuine defence counsel (and most probably after being subject to psychiatric intervention).

The dissenting narrative has its weaknesses; however, it objectively complies with the evidentiary record as incomplete as that record is, and the conclusions reached appear both logical and plausible. Two arguments in particular completely undermine the official narrative, these being the tollbooth shootings and the damaged AR-15 rifle found in the Seascope ruins. To disbelieve the gunman had accomplices, you need to disbelieve three corroborative witness statements (not to mention audio analysis of shooting while "Jamie" was on the phone with Victoria Police negotiator Terry McCarthy). To disbelieve evidence was planted at Seascope to incriminate Bryant, you are likewise required to put fantasy before fact. In the light of these two arguments alone, it is impossible to imagine Bryant ever having been convicted if he had been given a fair trial with competent representation.

Information embargo

At a conference of the Australian Society of Archivists, conducted in Perth, Western Australia, 25th to 28th September 2018, it was reported [Keith Allan Noble: "Official Terror in Tasmania Australia" (2019)] that Tasmanian archivist Nicki Ottavi claimed a 75 year embargo had been placed on the release of official Tasmania Police records relating to the Port Arthur massacre. She further claimed that the eventual release of such information would be at the sole discretion of just one person, the Tasmania Police Commissioner, whoever he or she might happen to be at that future time.

Deductive blindness

It is a misconception to believe such a conspiracy could not remain a secret. Obviously, it has. Planning would have been informal and unrecorded, on a need-to-know basis with just a few fully in the know and those making most arrangements uninformed as to true purpose. With at least six insiders shot dead, the fear of God would have been put into the lesser players, and an ends-justifies-means ideology has led to even ordinary people saying "well at least we got rid of assault rifles". Even supposing there were whistle blowers, who would believe them? There is already sufficient evidence in the public domain to disprove the official narrative, but few people are listening.

Why Australians prefer not to listen is actually an interesting question. Is it a psychological need to believe in the system, or simply a matter of not wanting to appear foolish? Perhaps an imbedded fear of guns paralyses people's critical faculties. Or is it because, in this 'buy it, don't build it', 'throw it away, don't fix it', digitised, service-oriented, consumerist society, people have insufficient practical intelligence to interpret hard evidence? More probably, it is a complete lack of curiosity and/or concern resulting from a preoccupation with more personal pursuits such as career and financial betterment, personal appearance, recreational activities, boys' (and girls') toys, television, social media, etc. The most significant factor, however, has to be unwavering mass media support for the official narrative. Even the supposedly erudite presenters at Radio National (ABC) exude an intellectual smugness to the point of totally ignoring concerned listeners' enquiries. In Australia today, seeing black swans without cultural approval is entirely unacceptable, and only leads to one being labelled a "conspiracy theorist", the universally pejorative epithet for people who legitimately question any official story.