

*Calodema*, 116: 1-20 (2010)

**Letters addressed to T.J. Hawkeswood from Prof. Clyde Manwell of the Zoology Department, University of Adelaide, South Australia during 1986 and 1987 regarding intellectual suppression in Australian Universities, Museums etc. as well as events surrounding the famous Wells-Wellington reptile affair of 1985, the horrendous Julian Ford suicide case of 1987 and the Hiller foreword affair of 1987**

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Hawkeswood, T.J. (2010). Letters addressed to T.J. Hawkeswood from Prof. Clyde Manwell of the Zoology Department, University of Adelaide, South Australia during 1986 and 1987 regarding intellectual suppression in Australian Universities, Museums etc. as well as events surrounding the famous Wells-Wellington reptile affair of 1985, the horrendous Julian Ford suicide case of 1987 and the Hiller foreword affair of 1987. *Calodema*, 116: 1-20.

**Abstract:** 8 letters from Prof. Clyde Manwell of the Zoology Department, University of Adelaide, South Australia addressed to Trevor J. Hawkeswood during 1986 and 1987 are reproduced here for the first time. The letters cover many issues in Australian biology, ranging from general intellectual suppression, to the famous Wells-Wellington reptile affair, the horrendous Julian Ford suicide case and the Hiller foreword affair. Intellectual suppression was rife in Australia during the 1970's and 1980's and is no doubt still rife, but the emergence of Internet power appears to be having some positive effects to reduce the suppression. In addition, many of the initial suppressionists have died, retired or are no longer as strong as they were earlier. Before the Internet, dissemination of these important issues was very difficult and publication outlets also restricted, but now papers, reports and letters can be published easily and cheaply on the Internet and now millions can have ready and free access. Prof. Clyde Manwell died in December 2007. Such works as these will be a testament to his efforts in helping others against Intellectual Suppression in the "Land Down Under", a country which will probably always remain "Down Under" in comparison to the higher intellectual status of other countries.

## **Introduction**

During the 1970's and 1980's the phenomenon of Intellectual Suppression was rife in Australia. So much so, that three academics from Adelaide, South Australia and one from the Australian Capital Territory, produced the first definitive book on the subject in Australia (Martin *et al.*, 1986). Suppression was rife in Government, Museums and Universities and no doubt is still undertaken by those in power in these times of greed and need. The famous Wells and Wellington affair is one of the most highly documented cases in Australian herpetological history (e.g. Grigg & Shine, 1985; King & Miller, 1985; Heatwole, 1985; Gans, 1985). This case was even more momentous than the one where G. Krefft (herpetological curator) was physically thrown out of the Australian Museum after being fired and later died a poverty-stricken broken man because he had no employment (another terrible blight in the history of the so-called greatest country on Earth!!). R.W. Wells and C.R. Wellington published a monumental paper (synopsis) in 1984 totally revising the Australian reptile fauna (Wells & Wellington, 1984). This publication was followed in 1985 by another controversial work on reptile classification (viz. Wells & Wellington, 1985). In these papers, they named and renamed hundreds of new species and genera, which caused the scientific establishment to go ballistic. One of the greatest suppressionists in Australian history, G.B. Monteith (a Queensland hillbilly who "just wanted to collect insects"), and who had exploited the

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University system in Queensland thereby becoming a Curator of Lower Entomology at the Queensland Museum in Brisbane, tried to chop up Wells and Wellington with his extremist article called "Terrorist Tactics in Taxonomy" (Monteith, 1985). This article, incidentally, was also published (almost verbatim) in at least three other Australian scientific news bulletins, e.g. *Myrmecia*, *Australian Limnological Society Newsletter*. Later there was a stunning case of suppression by the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service who "picked on" a famous Western Australian scientist (ornithologist), Dr J.R. Ford, when he came over to Queensland to study birds. The Queensland wildlife authorities acted like a SWAT team out of the American gangster movies in their heavy-handed treatment of the mild and meek biologist from the outback of Western Australia. In the end, Julian Ford took his own life as a result of the immense pressure and threats by the Queensland Government. They threatened to jail him for 20 years for collecting a few birds for his research, supposedly without a permit!. (Apparently the permit was paid for before Ford arrived in Queensland by a signed cheque but the permit was not issued until after his arrest!). It was a very sad case but at least one authority in the Qld National Parks and Wildlife Service (the Director, G.W. Saunders) also paid the ultimate penalty, dying soon after, probably through guilt and pressure put upon him by the media and the public. At that time, Queensland was governed by the "hillbilly dictator" ("Sir") Joh Bjelke Petersen, who retarded Queensland intellectually and conservation-wise by at least 40 years. He had many cronies, most of whom died soon after retirement (e.g. B. Austin, D. Lane) or within office (e.g. R. Hinze). Queensland has only recently recovered from the reign of old "Sir" Joh.

The history of Australia has really been disgraceful overall when one looks at it realistically without political and religious bias and these suppressionist incidents where people have died, have lost jobs or have been denied employment etc. have not added anything good to the general history of the country, which started out with mainly "bog Irish" illiterate convicts and a unbelievably corrupt penal system instigated and maintained by the British.

This article deals with letters between T.J. Hawkeswood and Professor Clyde Manwell of the University of Adelaide, South Australia in regard to issues of intellectual suppression. The letters detail something of what has occurred in this country and the previous futility of dealing with the problems. Now that the Internet is here, many of these problems have vanished and the truth can be told for all of the world to see and hear. There will be no need to fear the suppressionist any longer.

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**REPRODUCTION AND ANNOTATIONS OF C. MANWELL'S LETTERS (1986-1987)**

**Letter 1.**

4 June 1986  
"The Old Barn"  
Normanville South Australia 5204

Dear Dr. Hawkeswood,

I have just read your 30 May letter with considerable concern. The problems you mention warrant a public hearing.[1].

The critical matter is to have documentary evidence of where individuals have been denied access to public collections. Should such documentary evidence be obtainable, then one could consider several lines of action:

a) State and/or Federal M.P. [2].

b) Short, succinct letters to *SEARCH* and other Australian journals. (Such letters should not mention names of individuals as editors naturally worry about defamation writs [3]. However, the situations should be described sufficiently accurately so that "no malice" and "in the public interest" defences are manifestly obvious).

Such attempts at disciplinary monopoly are probably fairly common. I am appalled at such behaviour. On no less than six occasions my wife and I have been turned down for grants - only to have others who were awarded grants ask us to show them techniques or to give them our data base! [4]. However, I am at least employed (actually taking early retirement). For unemployed scientists to be denied access to materials is criminal!

What is so unfortunate in this case is that the "jewel beetle" family [5] have been relatively neglected. So much work needs to be done on the biology, taxonomy and conservation of buprestids. By denying able and enthusiastic researchers the opportunities, the universities are only hastening the extinction of many species - not least of which is the independent researcher who is willing to speak out.

Let me know if you can get documentary evidence!

*Clyde Manwell*

Prof. C. Manwell  
Dept. of Zoology  
University of Adelaide  
South Australia 5001

Annotations for Letter 1.

1. I sent a letter to Clyde Manwell in early 1986 after I had read his book entitled *Intellectual Suppression\** in Australia. I outlined to him, the conspiracy that had been perpetrated against me in this country by Dr S. Barker of the same Zoology Department, University of Adelaide, who had prevented me (with help from others such as G.A. Holloway of the Australian Museum in College Street, Sydney and G.B. Monteith of the Queensland Museum, Brisbane, Queensland) from examining public insect collections during 1975-1987. [\*Martin, B., Ann Baker, C.M., Manwell, C. & Pugh, C. (eds.) (1986). *Intellectual Suppression: Australian case histories*,

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*analysis and responses.* Angus & Robertson Publishers, Sydney.

2. Almost of these Australian politicians over the past 50 years have been absolutely useless concerning science and the environment (see e.g. \*Hawkeswood, 2008) and I have NEVER voted for any of them. [\*Hawkeswood, T.J. (2008). Reproduction of a letter to Mr Wayne Goss, Premier of Queensland by T.J. Hawkeswood. *Calodema Supplementary Paper No. 85*: 1-3; available as a free pdf file from [www.calodema.com](http://www.calodema.com)].

3. This situation could now be changed with the power of the Internet.

4. This is so typical of those involved in the corrupt funding system in Australia.

5. Buprestidae (Coleoptera).

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### Letter 2.

1 September 1986

Trevor J. Hawkeswood  
49 Venner Road  
Annerley, Brisbane, Qld., 4103

Dear Dr. Hawkeswood

Upon receiving your most interesting 30 May [1986] letter, I dashed off a quick handwritten note [Letter 1 above], emphasising that your case was by no means an isolated one and that it is desirable to have as much documentary evidence as possible in order to mount a campaign. Now, having taken early retirement, I can comment a bit more freely and I hope to provide some encouragement for you to write up your experiences.

You are not the first person who has complained to me about Dr. Barker [1]; I think you must be the third or fourth, though the contexts have differed somewhat in that the other cases did not involve attempts to suppress work on buprestids. Barker [1] has had some difficulties with postgraduate students. However, he is in a very secure position, for his wife is the personal assistant to the Vice-Chancellor. [1]

After *Intellectual Suppression* [2] was published, there have been a number of additional cases brought to our attention; unfortunately they are all unpublished. I am trying to encourage people to write up their cases, or even get journalists interested in writing them up. There are of course, some real problems:

1. It is not easy to get material of this type published [3]. However, student university newspapers are often willing to needle the establishment. Abuse of postgraduate students, tutors, teaching fellows etc., can sometimes be published in the student newspapers. While establishment figures can react with libel writs, this is a little dicey: suing the student newspaper is not the way to win friends for university administrators and senior staff. One student editor told me of how he was routinely threatened with defamation writs - but they never followed through.

2. Australian laws on defamation are very strict, and they vary from state to state (sic). Usually, a libel writ will fail if one can prove three things: what one wrote is true; it was written without malice (never ridicule a suppressor, however tempting the opportunity); and, it is in the public interest to reveal the naughtiness.

3. In difficult cases it may be valuable to know that the records of parliamentary debates are absolutely privileged, i.e., if you quote from them (and do not add further

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embellishments) they are safe from defamation. Hence, if at all possible, try to get a member of parliament interested in your case, interested enough to ask some questions in parliament so that it gets into the debate.

4. This is difficult because so many Australian MPs are just not interested in science, universities or environmental problems. [4].

5. Closeness to the case. The victim may know their situation best but be too close to the case to give an entirely objective view, or a clear presentation that readers can understand easily. To a lesser extent the same problem exists when friends write up a case. Nevertheless, this often has to be done. If possible, a journalist may be interested - but there again there is the problem of getting Oz journalists off “tits and bums” journalism and grafting some gonads onto them so that they will stand up to the establishment (including their own editors).

6. You might consider writing up your case, being careful about naming people, and then send suppressors pre-publication copies, asking for any comments and corrections. Several reviewers of our book have emphasised that the most damning fact was that the administrators do not even attempt to defend their actions - and in the very few cases where the administrators wrote *anything*, it was weak and irrelevant!

7. Three of us have just completed an open-ended survey of staff at the University of Adelaide and at SAIT [5]; what is unusual about this approach is that, besides a questionnaire, they are also invited to make additional comments or send copies of documents. The result has been simply staggering. Higher education is in a much bigger mess than anyone realises. There is need for a similar survey about what postgraduates, tutors, teaching fellows etc. think about their work environment.

I hope you will write up some of your experiences.

Yours sincerely,

*Clyde Manwell*

Prof. C. Manwell  
“The Old Barn”  
Normanville South Australia 5204

PS. It just occurred to me that there is a Dr. Susan Niven, an honorary research fellow in the School of Sciences at Griffith University - ask her about Dr. Barker!

Annotations for Letter 2.

1. These kinds of associations should be regarded as a conflict of interest and should not be allowed. Dr S. Barker, evil proponent of the Australian entomological clique - produces poor quality, crappy research which is published in elite State Museum journals - no other rival researchers are able to referee his papers. See also comments in the following paper: Hawkeswood, T.J. & Turner, J.R. (2008). Book Review: Barker, S. (2006). *Castiarina - Australia's richest jewel beetle genus*. Australian Biological Resources Study, Canberra. *Calodema Supplementary Paper No. 67*: 1-5. (available as a free pdf file from [www.calodema.com](http://www.calodema.com)).

2. *Intellectual Suppression* - Martin, B., Ann Baker C.M., Manwell, C. & Pugh, C. (eds.) (1986). *Intellectual Suppression: Australian case histories, analysis and responses*. Angus & Robertson Publishers, Sydney.

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3. There's no problem now with online internet publication which can reach the entire world.
  4. Most politicians in this country give the impression that they are only interested in themselves.
  5. South Australian Institute of Technology.
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### **Letter 3.**

3 December 1986

T.J. Hawkeswood  
49 Venner Road  
Annerley, Brisbane,  
Qld. 4103

Dear Mr. Hawkeswood,

Just a quick note to let you know that I am, indeed, still very interested in your case (and a number of others that have been brought to my attention). The last couple of months have been spent studying papers on "Agent Orange", herbicide toxicity etc. in writing a rebuttal of a most extraordinary article which appeared a few months ago in the *Medical Journal of Australia*. It had relatively little to do with medicine and was filled with errors when it did touch on that subject, but what was so extraordinary is that the article was largely a whitewash of the Evatt Royal Commission (which had, among other sins, simply plagiarised a large part of a legal submission by Monsanto Australia Ltd.!) and a highly politicised attack on the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia.

It will be tough - and tough to get published - but a candid article by you on your 'life experiences' as a biologist trying to get on with a career will be very valuable for many young scientists (and might teach some of the old ones something too). Judging from the reprint you sent me [1], you have been doing some good research and, what is more difficult, getting it published in good places. There is the interesting case of a British astronomer who, when he submitted his manuscripts from a university address, got them quickly accepted for publication - but, when he quit his university job to spend more time on research, and thus submitted his papers from a private address, found that the same journals rejected his papers.

I can reassure you on one point. I have never heard any gossip about you - but that might be because some of the academics who so love to carry tales know that I do not take kindly to such practices. And, alas, some of my former colleagues had an uncanny ability of being able to say irrelevant or erroneous comments *against* students (who I later learned were good students!). I suspect that mediocrity does not like competition - and it is especially galling when a mere student, or woman, publishes better research than they are capable of.

I had exactly the same experience as you did with a Australian journal. A paper which my wife and (I) did was rejected for no good reason by the *Aust. J. Biol. Sci.* [2]. The manuscript was then immediately accepted by *Genetical Research* (Cambridge). After my little run-in with the scientific establishment, we could not get research grant support. No less than 6 times other scientists who got research grants but who did not really have the

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techniques then wrote to us (or to my wife) to get help! One of the chaps was very decent and made some of the grant money available to us (and so we had a joint paper published last year). Brian Martin has recently had an excellent article published in the *British Medical Journal* [3] showing how a referee *must* have lied to justify rejecting a research grant proposal sent in to the NHMRC [4] in Canberra. It is getting like the USSR; you have to read overseas journals to see the exposes of what is going on here. (The reference is B. Martin, Bias in awarding research grants. *Brit. Med. J.* vol. 293, 30 Aug. 1986, pp. 550-552)[3].

The question to consider is the best way of writing up your case. Two good possibilities exist, and neither excludes the other (so you can try both options):

1. Short “popular” or semi-popular articles. For example, *Australian Society* might be interested in an article giving the “worm’s eye view” of what it is like to be an untenured staff member or postgraduate student, totally at the mercy of the system (and often without even the solid base of other student support, such has occurred during the late 1960’s, when student movements were more concerned about issues affecting even their minority groups - and postgrads are very much a minority, indeed becoming ‘an endangered species’ now in Australia). Student newspapers are however, still occasionally game to needle the academic establishment. It is a fascinating reflection on media monopoly in Australia that a reformist *conservative*, Edward St. John, Q.C., had to use student newspapers to get his criticism of the Liberal and National parties published!

2. A short book, a kind of autobiography. Tricky to write - and likely to be even more trickier to get published. Being in Queensland you might just be lucky in that respect. Although ‘southerners’ in Australia like to make jokes about Queensland, the fact is that Queensland is more ‘go ahead’ on publishing dissenting material than other publishers located elsewhere in Australia. Queensland U. Press would probably find such a manuscript too close to home to consider, but there is Outback Press and a couple of other Queensland publishers. The real luck would be to get an overseas publisher interested - but that really takes some sort of inside connection.

There is, I suspect, also a third alternative: getting a group of postgrads/postdocs/untenured staff together and preparing a collection of studies - in particular, also including an opinion poll, perhaps sampling 100-300 colleagues (about one-third will fill out this questionnaire, judging from my own recent experience). Right now the Minister for (or against?) Education and the whole incumbent government have a real mess on their hands. The introduction of the \$250 “administration fee” can only be considered a self-destructive joke - although it will be no joke for many students without such financial support. The local administration (U. Adelaide Council), after originally passing lofty motions, opposing all fees (when it did not look like any fees would be brought in), is now scurrying after the money, having lost all traces of credibility in the process. Thus, right now is a time when at least some people are beginning to look more critically at the universities and how they are run.

Anyway, keep struggling! Keep in touch and let me know if I can help. Try to get some of the issues aired in different ways. Consider the possibility of writing a semi-popular book on the jewel beetles, especially if you can get some good photographs. One improvement in the last few years is that people are much more interested in life histories,

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behaviour and conservation of esoteric groups of animals, including insects.

Yours sincerely,

*Clyde Manwell*

Prof. C. Manwell

“The Old Barn”

Normanville South Australia 5204

PS. I just thought of a useful contact: Dr. Ron Witten, 22 Moore St., Austinmer, NSW 2514; several years ago he wrote an article on exploitation of students - and was threatened with defamation!

Annotations for Letter 3

1. Hawkeswood, T.J. (1986). New larval host records for eight Australian jewel beetles (Coleoptera, Buprestidae). *Giornale Italiano di Entomologia*, 3: 173-177; Hawkeswood, T.J. & Peterson, M. (1982). A review of larval host records for Australian jewel beetles (Coleoptera: Buprestidae). *Victorian Naturalist*, 99: 240-251. (available as a free pdf file from [www.calodema.com](http://www.calodema.com)).
2. *Australian Journal of Biological Science*.
3. Martin, B. (1986). Bias in awarding research grants. *British Medical Journal*, 293: 550-552.
4. National Health and Medical Research Council.

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#### **Letter No. 4.**

6/1/87

Dear Trevor Hawkeswood,

My wife and I read your 20 December [1986] letter with great interest, for the contents of your letter helps us to firm up an idea we have had for a long time. But, first, above all, we are delighted to know that you have a book on jewel beetles coming out [1]. Seeing that you want this to be confidential (as with other material in your correspondence) we will, of course, honour that request.

What is important, however, is that the publication of such a book will make your case history much more impressive.

My wife and I have noticed that there is quite a protégé network in many areas of science, whereby in order to get a job or research funds you must conform to some (usually erroneous) narrow-minded research paradigm, often being the protégé of some particular ‘great name’. Such a protégé system allows some highly placed academics to exploit postgraduate students and non-tenured staff, some of whom are expected to do research for the ‘great name’ (who expects coauthorship, even if he hasn’t been at the lab bench or in the field for years).

Thus, such individuals (both the ‘great names’ and those who accept exploitation in the hope too that they can become ‘establishment’) fear, above all else, the individual



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researcher who is independent. The person who achieves even a modest publication record by his/her own hard work and originality is considered a threat to the protégé system, for it undermines the control on the reward system to some small extent and it undermines the ego of both the “great names” and their protégés to a much larger extent.

This observation will explain many results which are otherwise paradoxical if we accept the usual academic ideology about the importance of scholarship (not to mention teaching).

You may have noticed that article by Trudi McIntosh, “Butterfly king set to take his ‘ark’ into exile”, (The) Australian 9-10 June 1984, p. 12. Bernard d’Abrera, who has produced several beautifully illustrated books on butterflies in his 25 years in Australia, working independently, complains about the “ “established insect clique” who won’t tolerate outsiders like himself”. [2]

When your book comes out, you will be able to strike a blow against the pedants and the incompetents. In the present depressed and depressing job market, the “established insect clique” [2] may be able to keep you out of a good tenured position - but it will be a pyrrhic victory. Keeping good people out of jobs ultimately undermines the legitimacy of the academic/scientific system.

The students, or at least most of them, catch on pretty quickly. Almost every year a number of the staff in the Zoology Department [3] complain bitterly that all of the best students from Zool. III will not even enter the Honours programme, or, if they do, they drop out; practically none will go on for masters or doctorates even when awarded Commonwealth Fellowships! Of course, the answer is quite simple; but no student (and few staff) dare tell the emperors that they have no clothes (and no [sic] anything else). Whether or not this country can continue to survive as anything than a ‘banana republic’ [4] with the loss of many of its best minds is another matter! However, it is not just the undergraduate and postgraduate students who are demoralised. Our survey of tenured academic staff at both U. Adelaide and the South Australian Institute of Technology shows that a sizeable number of conscientious staff are thoroughly fed up with the administrative incompetence and dishonesty that goes on.

We found your “A review of larval host records for Australian Jewel Beetles (Coleoptera: Buprestidae)” a most interesting item [5]. There is much talk about “coevolution”, especially by American researchers interested in plant-insect relationships. However, this is a very difficult subject to come to grips with. I like the approach in [the] above-mentioned paper. A useful test of coevolutionary trends would be to compare “phylogenetic trees” for beetles versus plant hosts. If micro-evolutionary trends predominate, these phylogenetic trees should be superimposable, at least as to the position of nodes (branch points). However, if there are quantum jumps in larval feeding abilities and/or a lot of polyphagous tendencies, then the phylogenetic trees will not be congruent. The phylogenetic trees would be constructed using several different approaches, including biochemical characters. That, however, is a lot of work (my wife and I did [it] for the 10 major cattle breed groups and it involved analysing data from about 1000 publications).

Back to your forth-coming book on Jewel Beetles [1]. I hope that you make this book semi-popular for several reasons: (1) Many conservation groups ignore invertebrates, as well,

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as non-cuddly vertebrates; as a result, public attention to conservation becomes distorted by being focussed on a few mammals or birds and people (including scientists) lose sight of the necessity to conserve, not particular species, but whole ecosystems. It is habitat destruction that is the major cause of extinction. (2) Accessibility, even for scientists knowledgeable about their own speciality but amateurs in other fields, needs to be enhanced. One of Dr. Barker's students (Jenny Gardner: I may have spelled her last name incorrectly) showed me her collection of Jewel Beetles; it is obvious that they could be a first rate photographic study. (3) It is now possible to make a popular work quite 'scientific', e.g., by adding appendices and/or references and notes, thus preserving an accessible text and yet also supplying needed details.

After your book is published, then bring out your "memoirs". It will have much more impact.

Yours sincerely,

*Clyde Manwell*

Prof. C. Manwell

"The Old Barn"

Normanville South Australia 5204

PS. Have you been in contact yet with Dr. Susan Niven, School of Science, Griffith University? She works in theoretical ecology/logic/philosophy - and she knows Dr. Barker quite well! She has just come back from working in Thailand.

Annotations for Letter 4.

1. Actually the book was not on jewel beetles [Buprestidae: Coleoptera] per se, but a general book on a wide range of Australian beetles, viz. Hawkeswood, T.J. (1987). *Beetles of Australia*. Angus & Robertson Publishers, Sydney: 1-248, the first of its kind ever published in Australia.

2. The "established insect clique" described by Bernard D'Abrera has been rampant (and rabid) in Australia for over 40 years as far as I am aware. The main clique is within the Entomological Society of Queensland which is based at the Queensland Museum and at the University of Queensland. The clique has been run at various times by such people as G.B. Monteith of the Queensland Museum and E.N. Marks, M. Zalucki and M. Schneider of the University of Queensland. The clique also extends to the Queensland Department of Agriculture (QDPI) and the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Research Stations (BSERS). These persons actually despise outsiders and zealously attempt at all occasions to stop and discourage them from examining insect collections (all bureaucratic means are employed in this zealotry as well as verbal discouragements including violent threats), gaining jobs and research grants and accepting their research into "their" publications. Some of these problems such as publishing are now solved thanks largely to the Internet and the proliferation of new overseas journals in developed and developing countries. But these above-mentioned people should be pulled into line by the Australian and State Governments as they are ALL public servants (whether they like it or not) and their salaries are paid by the taxpayers of Australia.

3. University of Adelaide, Adelaide, South Australia.

4. Banana Republic - even though Paul Keating a one time Prime Minister of Australia said publicly that Australia was a "Banana Republic", this has been true for over 50 years and perhaps even longer. The Australian entomological society/community/clique has been operating like one for years as well. Many biological scientists, including a number of entomologists, e.g. P. Gullan & P. Cranston have left the country for good. However, the nasty Australian cliques are still operating, both in Zoology and Botany and in other fields.

5. Hawkeswood, T.J. & Peterson, M. (1982). A review of larval host records for Australian jewel beetles

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(Coleoptera: Buprestidae). *Victorian Naturalist*, 99: 240-251. (available as a free pdf file from [www.calodema.com](http://www.calodema.com)).

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### Letter No. 5.

21 February 1987

Dear Trevor,

Many thanks for the two letters, plus the enclosures (your "Contributions to Australian Biological Science", [1] which is a very nice item, and the xeroxes of the letter from Richard Wells [2] and the news item about Julian Ford. [3]).

1. Enclosed is a copy of the *Advertiser* (Adelaide) write-up about Julian Ford [3]. It is a terrible event - and by no means that the only one that has occurred in Australia. At least the Queensland National Park people will get a bit of bad publicity, but that is a very small compensation for the loss of a productive scientist and no compensation at all for Mrs. Ford. Unfortunately, we knew nothing about this matter until we read the article in the *Advertiser*. Someone should write it up in more detail, possibly quoting from the long letter that Ford wrote. You will see in the set of enclosures that I have mentioned the case briefly in reply to a really nasty and stupid book review of *Intellectual Suppression*, the book review published in *Social Alternatives* (which I understand is handled through the External Studies part of the U. of Queensland).

Enclosed as well is a xerox of an article from the *Illustrated Weekly of India*, entitled "Why do our Scientists commit Suicide?" I recall a recent visitor from India, who spent two months touring Australian universities as a guest of the AVCC [4] (and researching for a time in human genetics at ANU [5]), who said, and I can pretty well remember his words: "I used to think that vicious intrigue was solely an Indian vice but after what I've seen in Australia I think it is even worse here".

2. The letter from Richard Wells [2] is quite similar to that kind of intrigue against talented people who have developed on their own that I mentioned to you in an earlier letter. But, trying to take over his specimens (after being discouraging about his work) adds an especially nasty twist to it.

In that sense there is an important similarity in Richard Wells' case and Julian Ford's case: bureaucracy, in the guise of conservation, is used to get rid of outsiders - especially talented outsiders who might show up the many mediocrities that infest the state system, including both state environment authorities and higher education.

3. What can be done? One feels very discouraged - for many such cases exist. So far no administrative apparatchik has every (sic) really been held accountable. It is too bad that Magnus Peterson [6] did not get legal advice on Barker's letter [7], for I think that letter was both seriously defamatory and there could be no sustainable plea of "in the public interest" or a claim of privileged communication.

Sadly, nothing can be done to help Julian Ford. If you can, I would appreciate knowing more about him as a person and as a scientist. Perhaps his widow will release copies

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of his last letter. Obviously, this is a very delicate matter and, since I did not know him personally, I would not wish to write and do anything which might add to her misery. But I wouldn't mind seeing the Queensland National Parks people get put in their place over it [8]. With that cancelled cheque I would have thought that he (Julian Ford) would have had as good a case against them. But, as the Lindy Chamberlain case shows, being innocent is not enough. If there had been an effective support network in this "banana republic" [9] Ford might not have not felt alone and depressed.

4. As somewhat of an aside, I have met a number of state bureaucrats in wildlife conservation and they all complain about the internal incompetence and corruption. On about a dozen occasions I have tried to get these people to write up their experiences (and produce suitable documentation). While I do not blame them for not wanting to expose themselves, nothing will ever get done until somebody "blows the whistle" - and you must have the documentation to prove the allegations. One such chap claimed that he had so much dirt on fauna smuggling that, fearing for his life (organized crime is deep into bird and snake smuggling in Australia, see Bill Bottom's book *Connections*) he has filled an entire safe (in London) with incriminatory documents - but he used his silence to bargain with the government to get a cushy job in a sideways shuffle out of the Dept. of Environment into the Dept. of Education, where he has very little work to do!

I've also been quite alone among ecologists in arguing against conservation through bureaucratisation. You can not preserve species. You can only preserve ecosystems. And, thanks to the nasty way many fine taxonomists in Australia (whether "amateur" or "professional" is entirely irrelevant) have been treated, in many cases the conservation (?) people just do not know what they are preserving. I've also argued, again against the establishment, that the only way bird smuggling can be stopped is by a sensible legal export system, thus undercutting the criminal fringe. I even managed to get my views heard before some federal MP's - and one, an old-time ALP chap from Victoria, privately agreed with me. No amount of policing will stop a profitable trade: read McCoy's "Drug Traffic" and "Politics of Heroin in South-east Asia".

This state "conservation" departments just become big money-wasting bureaucracies, sometimes penetrated by organised crime and often (as you have quite correctly already deduced) used by establishment scientists to keep out competitors (or, more correctly, individuals they perceive as competitors, for so much research needs to be done there is actually very little true competition).

And, if you think conservation departments are bad, just look at both fisheries and agriculture. But, I have had one tiny triumph: I have encouraged a woman, who worked as a secretary, to publish a book on how one such government department works (or, rather, doesn't work). The department is livid with rage and suppressed the book by a state-controlled (but now privatised) press. However, it has gone to another publisher in the SA 'gulag'. Secretaries, I have found, usually know far more about how an organisation runs than do the bosses. And, short of going (sic) 'body searches', it is hard to keep them from running off the extra copy at the xerox machine.

5. In answer to your request, I've sent enclosed xeroxes of all of the reviews of Intellectual Suppression I know of. I'd be careful if you can supply any we've missed. There

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is also the copy of our five-page reply to *Social Alternatives*, which I am sending off. By any chance, do you know (or can you find out) who Brian Dalton, the book reviewer, is? It will be interesting to see if *Social Alternatives* will publish our corrections. We wouldn't mind if he had pointed out the many kinds of suppression and associated intrigue which we could cover in the book. But, to make fun of the victims really burns me up. I'm the first to admit that there are many dimensions to suppression which we did not adequately cover - if only because we had to be very careful about defamation and we had to be able to get published material and documentation. Our random survey (done after the book was published) turned up a lot of important information (which will ultimately be published but, again, with care not to jeopardise information).

6. Is it too late? The fall of civilization has always greatly intrigued me. Suetonius's "The Twelve Caesars" pretty much tells it all. Gibbons "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" (which I have read only in an abridged form and not the full six volumes) covers much the same in more detail and over a longer period of time. Several books on the fall of the Weimar Republic (and the rise of Hitler), e.g., Joachim Fest, Shirer, etc. are valuable - all studies on the universities and scientists in Germany in the 1930's come to much the same depressing conclusions: the intelligentsia were happy to see the Jews run out so that they could get their jobs (see Haberer, Fritz Ronger and Alan Beycheren's books). Certainly the Australian intelligentsia would behave in much the same way - or worse. Can any sort of countervailing force be organized from the few concerned scholars that exist here?

Anyway, keep in touch. When you and Richard Wells [2] get their books published, you will have an opportunity to right a few wrongs. But, it will not be easy. The biggest danger is being co-opted by the system. As Winston says in 1984: "Big Brother isn't so bad after all". [10].

Yours sincerely,

*Clyde*

PS. We've just noticed that Dr Susan Niven's (a refugee from U. Adelaide) address is near yours: PO Box 233, Annerley, Qld, 4103. Dr. Niven's main research interest is mathematical ecology and she has had had (sic) a tough time with the stupid #@&\*s in ARGS [11]. She knows Dr. Barker!

Annotations for Letter 5.

1. Hawkeswood, T.J. (1986). A list and notes on the Buprestidae (Coleoptera) collected during 1977-79 from the Armidale district, New South Wales. *Contributions to Australian Biological Science*, 1: 1-12.
2. Richard W. Wells (1950- ), Australian herpetologist and author of controversial works on the Australian reptile fauna.
3. Julian Ralph Ford (1932-1987), ornithologist from Western Australia.
4. Australian Vice Chancellors Committee.
5. Australian National University.
6. Magnus Peterson (1955- ), Australian herpetologist and entomologist, published in both fields of science.
7. S. Barker of the Zoology Department, University of Adelaide, Adelaide, South Australia, a well known suppressionist who tried to stop the publication of papers by M. Peterson and T.J. Hawkeswood on the beetle family Buprestidae which were submitted to the *Victorian Naturalist* in Melbourne, Victoria. Barker wrote a

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letter to the then Editor of the *Victorian Naturalist*, Mr R.L. Wallis complaining about one of Peterson's Buprestidae papers and other matters.

8. See reference in the introduction to this paper regarding G.W. Saunders of the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service, Brisbane, Queensland.

9. See Annotation 4 of Letter 4, page 10 of this paper.

10. From Orwell, G. (1949). *Nineteen eighty-four - a novel*. Secker and Warburg, London.

11. Australian Research Grants Scheme.

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### **Letter 6.**

24 August 1987

Dear Trevor,

Delighted to hear that your book [1] is now out. I look forward to seeing it in the bookshops, and I will be putting in orders via the libraries to get copies. A point worth considering is the following: prepare a very short outline of your book, just a few sentences, keeping it to one page together with the publishers name and address) and one or two of your photographs. This one page summary can be sent out with your reprints; also, you can provide copies of the one page advertisement to friends, who, in turn, can get their libraries to purchase the book. Having the publishers name and address is especially important for overseas contacts. The outline might summarize the importance of the book, the importance of beetles generally, and give the reader some idea of what to expect, e.g., the number of plates, keys, illustrations and/or references. It should be eye-catching. The simpler the writing style the better. This means that libraries can get the message quick. Right now library funds are in bad shape. You are in competition with all of the low grade porn, Rambo style novels, and the rest of the idiocy that infests the publishing market now. Thus, it is hard to persuade a librarian to invest in a good book. BUT, having some nice colour plates (like the two you sent me) will be a big help. Mounting one or two such plates on the one page advertisement might help. Plates add to the expense of the advertisement, but, especially for the library trade (which is the major purchaser of many types of specialised books) it commands attention. Such advertisements might also be sent, not only directly to some major libraries, but also to conservation and field naturalists groups. According to American, English and Australian studies involved with authors and self-publication, one expects about a 5-12% "return", i.e., that five to twelve per cent of respondents, suitably marketed, will order the book; unfortunately, those studies were done prior to the present depressed market. Targetting of overseas museums and major libraries might be worthwhile. Theoretically, one leaves this to the publisher. But, my experience is that publishers do not take much effort to market books, except, alas, those which are not worth marketing. Hence, one's own efforts, knowing the target populations, are best. Several of the books on self-publishing are full of useful ideas, even when one has used a regular publishing company.

Enclosed is a xerox (which you can keep) of the beetle article "seasonal temperatures in Britain during the past 22,000 years, reconstructed using beetle remains".[2]. In applying

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for grants, jobs etc., you can emphasize that such an approach in Australia is not possible because so little taxonomy and natural history work has been done. Studies of beetle remains at aboriginal archaeological sites would be very interesting. Not necessarily the work that you want to do, but, your taxonomic studies will make it possible for others.

Yours sincerely,

*Clyde*

Clyde Manwell  
'The Old Barn'  
Normanville, SA, 4204

Annotations for Letter 6.

1. Hawkeswood, T.J. (1987). *Beetles of Australia*. Angus & Robertson Publishers, Sydney.
2. Atkinson, T.C., Briffa, K.R. & Coope, G.R. (1987). Seasonal temperatures in Britain during the past 22,000 years, reconstructed using beetle remains. *Nature*, 325: 587-592.

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### **Letter 7.**

Wednesday 26 August 1987

Dear Trevor,

Just received your 22nd August letter, plus the two reprints and a xerox of the 21 Aug "To whom it may concern".[1].

It is sad to see such confusion. But, I think your 21 August "To Whom it may concern" provides a fair-sounding and plausible account. Such situations happen quite frequently in that a person contacted about writing an introduction or an article does not see eye-to-eye with the major author or editor.

I do not think that the publisher will be concerned for the following reasons: First, the introduction to a book (or foreword) is often the work of more than one hand; sometimes a distinguished individual is approached to supply an introduction with the author indicating the general areas that should be covered; in other cases, it is left to the invitee. But, it is not unusual for there to be disagreements. Second, Hiller makes no allegation concerning the body of the work.

It is difficult to know just what to do. A few possibilities go through my mind. You may not like any of them, but it is worth thinking over.

1. Either you or a lawyer would write a short letter to Hiller, enclosing with that letter, a copy of your 21 August 1987 "To Whom It may Concern". Hiller would be asked simply: "This is my understanding of the situation; if you have any differences of opinion, please explain those differences to me." Such a letter should probably be best sent registered post (so that, if he causes trouble in the future, the fact that he ignored such as reasonable

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request, would count heavily against him). The letter should be as neutral as possible so that, if it must be presented in court, there can be no excuse on Hiller's part.

2. Ignore him. Alas, that may not work, especially with other people around who might use him to get at you. I know this sounds a bit paranoid, but I've seen too much of this sort of stupid academic back-stabbing. If people would just work and stop bearing tales, life would be much easier. That is why I think suggestion "1" is worth considering. It does not specifically challenge or incite him, but it makes it clear that you consider his comments unwarranted and you expect him to explain his situation completely.

3. If he overstated the situation to the publisher, then there is the question of defamation. Much depends on how the publisher reacts. Clearly, were the publisher not to sign the contract for a second book, then what would be the prima facie evidence of damage, serious damage for which recourse to the laws on libel/slander would be warranted. On the other hand, the publisher is (my guess) more likely to consider his claim unwarranted and unfair. In that case, no serious damage has been done. Incidentally, "3" might follow "1", if you find out later that he has caused damage. If he Hiller fails to respond to a reasonable request to explain his objection that he communicated to A & R [2], or he produces inoffensive and/or exaggerated reply, it would be useful in evidence.

A somewhat similar approach might be considered for the tale-bearing that you "had recently danced down the corridors of the Botany Dept. University of New England naked and was having a shave"! Incredible the crap that gets spread about. I have heard the craziest stories told about various people. In a few instances I know that the stories are either wildly exaggerated or simply not true. The fact that you had not been there since 1986 gives you a strong card to play. A polite inquiry letter to Prof. Clifford [3], just asking him to explain what the alleged offense was and when it was supposed to have occurred, might cause him to clean up his act. [3].

Incidentally, what do you know about the Zoology Dept., at Queensland? Along with your letter today, I received a very curious letter. I do not want to disclose details because I always make it a point to respect the confidence and privacy of people who write. But, if you know anything about possible problems that an overseas student on a Ph.D. programme might have had, I would be interested to hear more. I had always thought U.Qld.'s Zoology was one of the better places - it couldn't be worse than ANU [4] (where three times I have had to go to the rescue, including once officially at the University's request) - simply because it had not offended recently, in contrast to other places.

Anyway, keep up the work. Hopefully you will have received the xerox of the Nature article on beetles. Your mention of the "tremendous (sic) silence" is not surprising. I just hope Barker [5] et al. are not asked to write a book review. Chances are they will not be. Also, even if asked, they might decline: to attack someone openly, where he may have the right of rebuttal (or even legal action were the review to be maliciously written and abusive), always runs a risk. Most academics are despicable cowards. They will not protest injustice to others, will not defend colleagues who are wrongly accused, and will not carry out their arguments with detachment and courtesy, though without cringing and pulling rank.

*Clyde*



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Annotations to Letter 7.

1. Before my *Beetles of Australia* book was published (1987), I asked Mr Anthony (Tony) Hiller of the Mt. Glorious Biological Centre north west of Brisbane, to supply a foreword to the book, *Beetles of Australia*. Hiller had previously allowed me to photograph several rainforest beetles for the publication and we had cordial relations (even my mother was a guest there once!). I waited at least a month but no foreword issued from Hiller, who now said that he had no time to complete it. I offered to assist and detailed one day over the phone some ideas. Hiller still procrastinated. In the end after several months, I wrote a foreword for him and asked him to sign off on it. In the meantime, a certain person from the Queensland Museum Entomology Department (viz. the nefarious G.B. Monteith) “upset the apple cart” and influenced Hiller not to have anything to do with my beetle publication. I withdrew my foreword after Hiller said he could not put his name to the foreword for the book. I revised the foreword with Mr C.J. Parker, an associate of myself, and prominent salesman of Brisbane, Queensland and he agreed to put his name to the foreword. After the book was published in mid 1987, Hiller (under the influence of the puppetmaster Monteith) sued me through a Brisbane solicitor, stating that he was the sole author of the foreword. The publisher was aghast and believed Hiller’s story and was scared by the solicitor’s allegations and threats and eventually recalled the remaining copies of the book that were in bookshops. I couldn’t believe that this had happened. The foreword was removed from those copies and then redistributed. An anonymous note in the *News Bulletin of the Entomological Society of Queensland* (1987) derided the publication by calling it “a small picture book” and mentioned that the book had been recalled (no reason given). No doubt the unproductive members of the Queensland entomological clique were very happy! I ignored the solicitors demand to pay anything to Hiller, as it was my work in the first place. Many copies of the book with the foreword remain in existence however, but these books have not as yet become collector’s items. I am now very careful who I deal with when publishing research or books. The last two books I have written (viz. *Spiders of Australia* and *Host Plants of Chrysomelidae of the World* with Dr Pierre Jolivet of France - details of these publications can be found at [www.calodema.com](http://www.calodema.com)), have been published overseas and have either sold out or are still selling well. It should be noted that Hiller (who proved in the end to be nothing more than a “dope smoking” hillbilly) has published virtually nothing in entomology. His last entomological publication, a paper on *Trichaulax* (Coleoptera: Scarabaeidae) in the *Australian Entomological Magazine* (1990), was published 20 years ago, was not a proper scientific revision of the group and failed to cite the works of others. Despite these faults, the paper was accepted by his mates of the Queensland entomological clique who believe that they control what is said and done in entomology in Queensland and in the rest of Australia. [Hiller, A. (1990). Notes on systematics and biology of *Trichaulax* Kraatz (Cetoniinae). *Australian Entomological Magazine*, 17: 117-130].
2. Angus & Robertson Publishers, Sydney.
3. H.T. Clifford, ex CSIRO botanist from Melbourne, Victoria, one-time Head of the Botany Department, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Queensland and now ensconced at the Queensland Museum, Brisbane.
4. Australian National University.
5. Shelley Barker, previously of the Zoology Department, University of Adelaide, Adelaide, South Australia, now retired and residing in Perth, Western Australia.

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### Letter 8.

29 October 1987

Dear Trevor,

Thanks for your 3 October letter with some very interesting observations. Accordingly, I thought you might be interested in my reply to a recent inquiry from abroad about doing something to oppose intellectual suppression. My reply to his brief inquiry is perhaps ultimately to be lengthened into a small paper, so I’m looking for ideas, criticisms, references to relevant literature etc.

I’m hoping that Brian Martin or some other person employed in a “science studies” department will take up one of the themes: a survey of parliamentarians attitudes towards

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INTELLECTUAL SUPPRESSION. This might be done by using as copy of my letter-to-the-editor of *National Farmer* (which provides a short summary of suppression and an indication of what it costs: in this case at least \$1 billion in lost exports plus about an extra 10-20 million dollars per year in additional pesticide residue tests). The idea is that here is a simple example for simple-minded politicians. Such an example of parliamentarian/s reactions - even ignoring the questionnaire and the case history provides a useful piece of information - could be extremely interesting. Having a short example is imperative: in that way the lack of reply, or getting the facts fouled up, can not be attributed to busy men having to wrestle with a long, complicated and (to them) boring case history.

CSIRO is a very interesting and complicated case history in its own right. Some divisions are much better than others. Marine sciences, especially marine biology, is a disgrace, even by third-world, banana republican standards. Biochemistry is quite good, as is plant industry. The statistics group are also of world standard - but the computer end (in part) has been 'privatised' by the government, which makes their service more expensive to others.

As you observe, and I agree, several ex-CSIRO who became academics are among the worst offenders for combining suppression with poor performance in both research and teaching. May be that is why they are "ex-" CSIRO.

Too much of the CSIRO agricultural research is only for the benefit of the 'big boys', agribusiness and transnational pastoral complexes (Vesteys, King Ranch etc.). In part, there is sometimes an uneasy relationship between CSIRO agricultural scientists and the state departments of agriculture.

Neville Wran [1] is a fascinating case history in himself. In a few ways, Wran [1] was one of the better politicians; he actually was interested in conservation to a better degree than most polliies. He just might shake-up CSIRO Ecology and Wildlife, which need it. However, Wran also has some strong negatives. No politician can rise to the top in NSW without accommodating local crime and corruption - and Evan Whitton's Can of Worms, the recently published "Unauthorised Biography" of Wran, and Athol Moffitt's "A Quarter to Midnight", all have in common repeated examples of Wran's indifference to problems of crime and corruption. In fact, Wran got so sassy during the Lionel Murphy affair that he committed a flagrant violation of sub judice, an absolutely incredible error for a trained barrister, let alone a QC. He got a light conviction, only fined, but should have had a brief visit "On her majesty's pleasure" [2] - after all, what Wran did was considerably worse than the similar offence for which the radio commentator Derryn Hinch [3] got both fined and gaoled. Besides these dubious activities, Wran is basically ignorant of science; nor does he have any commercial experience, especially related to R & D. Wran trained as a lawyer, specialising to some extent in industrial relations, and then oozed into politics.

I've finally found a couple of reprints of the dog papers. [4]. As you will see, there is actually quite a bit scattered through the literature on women suckling puppies. Bear in mind that, especially in the pre-antibiotic days, a woman whose child died while still nursing often ran a serious risk of infection as a result of the sudden drop in demand for her breast milk. Thus, using an animal to get rid of excess milk, turns out on occasion to be a life-saving idea. In some cultures it became institutionalised into elaborate rituals, e.g., at one time in Burma

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large numbers of women nursed baby elephants; the Ainu of Hokkaido island in Japan (and on Sakhalin in the USSR) have an elaborate bear ritual, where women nurse baby bears (which are then sacrificed as a community meal); several groups produce beast-milk-fed puppies for special dietary treats, although much more frequently dogs destined for human consumption are just fed a standard vegetarian diet.

I'm delighted to hear that one of Barker's 'species' will be changed to your name [5]. That should teach him a lesson.

Good luck and keep up the good work.

Yours sincerely,

*Clyde*

Clyde Manwell,  
'The Old Barn',  
Normanville, S.A. 5204

Annotations for Letter 8.

1. One time Premier of New South Wales.
2. Prison.
3. Famous gutsy radio announcer from Melbourne, Victoria.
4. Manwell, C. & Baker, C.M.A. (1984). Domestication of the dog, hunter, food, bed-warmer, or emotional object. *Zeitschrift für Tierzüchtung und Züchtungsbiologie*, 101: 241-256.
5. Peterson, M. (1987). A replacement name for *Stigmodera fusca* Barker (Coleoptera, Buprestidae). *Giornale Italiano di Entomologia* 3: 275-277. [The replacement name is *Stigmodera hawkeswoodi*, now known as *Castiarina hawkeswoodi*]. (available as a free pdf file from [www.calodema.com](http://www.calodema.com)).

## **Conclusions**

Professor Clyde Manwell was an internationally famous scientist who undertook and published research in many areas of biology including genetics, biochemistry and evolution, mostly of mammals. Many of his publications were written with his wife, C.M. Ann Baker, including the famous molecular biology and evolution book (Manwell & Baker, 1970).

I am grateful to Clyde Manwell for his assistance during the days of the "great suppression". I received many other letters and documents from him during the 1980's and will hopefully publish these in due course. Unfortunately, during the 1990's Clyde suddenly decided to leave Australia for good (like so many other prominent people including intellectuals who are fed up with the Australian system) and after his settlement in England, correspondence waned and finally stopped. Clyde was disillusioned with the state of science in this country and presumably wanted to retire peacefully without any more tumultuous occurrences such as the fight against the Australian academic suppressionists. But at least Angus & Robertson Publishers had the guts to publish the suppression book (viz. Martin *et al.*, 1986). Monteith's (1985) article attacking Wells and Wellington and all other authors who sided with them, was far more of a terrorist tactic than the original Wells and Wellington papers (viz.

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Wells & Wellington, 1984, 1985).

### **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank Mr Richard Wells, Lismore, New South Wales for reviewing the paper before publication and for details on G. Krefft. Dr Brian Martin, Arts Faculty, University of Wollongong, New South Wales and Dr Graeme Wells, Hornsby, New South Wales, also read through the entire paper and offered some careful changes. Mr Raymond T. Hoser and Mr. K.L. Dunn of Victoria also read through the draft of the paper.

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