

Australian Rationalist

Journal of the Rationalist Society of Australia

Numbers 75/76 • Spring 2006/Summer 2006-2007

Editor

Elise Jones

Editor Emeritus

Ian Robinson

Editorial Assistants

Anna Kelsey-Sugg

Julie Marlow

Bodye Darvill

Rebecca Fleming

Business Manager

David McKenzie

Contributions in the form of articles, letters etc. are welcome and should be sent to:

The Editor

Australian Rationalist

PO Box 1219

Fitzroy North Victoria 3068

email: kevin.childs@bigpond.com

Subscriptions and other business matters should be sent to:

Lois Sweet

RSA Secretary

42 Ruskin Avenue

Croydon Victoria 3136

Tel: (03) 9723 2792

Fax: (03) 9725 8577

email: rationalist@bigpond.com

Membership application form is enclosed.

Copyright restrictions apply unless otherwise stated. Views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the RSA. Copyright remains with the author/artist.

Publication details:

Australian Rationalist

(ISSN-13: 9 771036 819003)

is published by the Rationalist Association of Australia Ltd on behalf of the Rationalist Society of Australia.

ACN 004 121 117

Registered office:

42 Ruskin Avenue

Croydon Victoria 3136

Australia

Printed by Currency Communications Australia © (03) 9381 2333.

Distributed by Gordon & Gotch.

Print Post approved 349069/00042.

Editorial

2

OPINION

Time to get out the rat poison

6

Dr Geoffrey Chia

A radically different life

10

Gloria Meltzer

Hamas: the betrayal of the Palestinian cause

15

Joseph Harfouch

RATIONALIST SOCIETY TALKS

Religion, RU486, and other matters

19

Senator Lyn Allison

Misconception

23

Myfanwy Walker

Donor conception

28

Michael Linden

Defusing the 'ficking bomb': an argument against the use of torture

32

Catherine McDonald

FEATURES

US manufacturing war with Iran

39

Dr Adam Tarock

Alarums and excursions: infiltrating at the Palace of Versailles

50

Dr Jocelyne A Scutt

'Intelligent design' as a scientific theory

58

Graeme Lindenmayer

Love rationally

65

David Freeman

Sixth World Atheist Conference report

71

Atheist Centre, India

BOOKS

Three Wishes: Palestinian and Israeli Children Speak Out

76

by Deborah Ellis

Reviewed by June Factor

How Simone de Beauvoir Died in Australia – Stories and Essays

78

by Sylvia Lawson

Reviewed by Dr Jocelyne A Scutt

Passionate Minds

83

by David Bodanis

Reviewed by Penelope Whitson

Planet of Slums

86

by Mike Davis

Reviewed by Cedric Beidatsch, MA

Letters

89

Illustrations by Waldemar Buczynski, Simon Kneebone, Mandy Ord and Wyn Richards. Illustration on p59 by Jacob Buczynski.

The Rationalist Society of Australia prefers reason to prejudice, science to superstition, evidence to faith; promotes secular ethics and education; holds lectures, conferences and social activities.