

# The Sydney Morning Herald

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## HOW TOP CHEFS USE SCIENCE IN THE KITCHEN

GOOD LIVING

## Mother and son stick to the script

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## The win that will transform golf in Asia

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# Who killed Isaac Dinsdale? A mystery from the city's wild side

Jock Cheetham

OPENING the door late one November night was the worst decision of Zac Dinsdale's life. About 10 men and boys waited outside.

A scuffle broke out. Dinsdale—a tough scaffolder who had played league for New Zealand juniors—broke through his attackers and turned left out the gate. He ran beside plastic barricades lining the footpath, past six houses and a lane—running for his life.

Neighbours peering into the murky night saw him slip and fall. As he lay semi-conscious, his attackers surrounded him—jumping on his chest, kicking him, calling him a dog. Before midnight on November 18, 2005, Isaac Dinsdale, 33, was dead.

## PART ONE: MIDNIGHT MURDER

The story behind his death in Woolloomooloo is about a community near the edge. This community—awash with drugs but bereft of opportunity—mostly distrusts police. On one side, not far from William Street, street dwellers urinate around the local shop, exposing themselves to children. On the other side, the mega-rich live and party in harbourside splendour.

Woolloomooloo raises many questions—about poverty, about housing, about justice. More than

three years after a gang killed a father of five—after a huge investigation, alleged witness intimidation and multiple court cases—no one has been convicted. So who killed Zac Dinsdale?

A neighbour in Dowling Street, Sarah Miller, was leaning on her balcony smoking when a group of males walked quietly up the street to Dinsdale's house, she told the NSW Supreme Court in 2007. After a scuffle, which Miller heard but did not see, she saw Dinsdale run through the group and fall over down the street.

The group followed Dinsdale down the hill, but Miller testified she could only see shadowy figures surrounding him some 30 metres away. In court she could not identify anyone.

The blood stains on the veranda suggest Dinsdale was knifed on his doorstep. But the tiny dried drops could not speak of how many of the nine stab wounds Dinsdale endured were inflicted at his front door.

Dinsdale fell outside the house of Christine Lavender. She first heard footsteps, then a ruckus outside her window. "I could tell that someone was getting bashed up and just some voices yelling and stuff like that," she told the Court.

Lavender, a large woman with health problems, got up and went to the window. She parted her blinds to see a group of males on the footpath, just a few metres away. "They were punching him, kicking him,

laughing and you know, it is like they were fighting amongst each other to see who was going to hit him next," she testified.

The pummelling caused abrasions, but did not fracture any bones. Lavender rattled her security screen and yelled out for the group to leave him alone. But they continued. She turned on her porch light, hoping it would make them leave.

"One guy was jumping on his chest, another guy would line his boot up and kicked him fair in the face and you know, it was pretty brutal what they were doing," Lavender said. They were calling him names such as "dog".

"His body was just limp. When they would kick him like his body would move from the kick."

Beside her, Lavender's two dogs barked furiously at the commotion. She called 000 and asked for the police.

Outside, several people interrupted the melee, one shouting: "He's had enough. Get off him." The attackers scattered. A crowd gathered. Several people called an ambulance. One man wiped blood from Dinsdale's face.

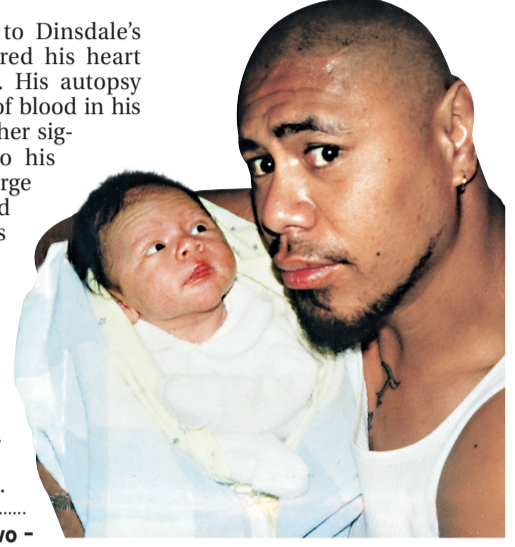
Dinsdale's partner, Kristen Henderson, was several blocks away at her cousin's house with their children when a man brought news of the attack. Henderson left the children and rushed to the scene.

An ambulance arrived and took Dinsdale to nearby St Vincent's Hospital. Henderson followed with a relative.

A knife wound to Dinsdale's chest had punctured his heart and cut an artery. His autopsy revealed 1.6 litres of blood in his lung cavity. The other significant wound, to his stomach, cut his large intestine and sliced the branch of his aorta that carried blood to his left leg. Either would have killed him.

Before he could be operated on, Dinsdale was pronounced dead. It was 11.48pm on November 18, 2005.

**Tomorrow: Part Two - The Investigation.**



Dinsdale with his son Shannon.

# Garrett concedes: extinction inevitable

Tom Arup  
Environment Correspondent

THE Environment Minister, Peter Garrett, has warned that money to save endangered wildlife is limited and some species may have to be abandoned when funding decisions are made.

In one of the strongest speeches of his ministerial career he told an international conference of ecologists in Brisbane that the Government will shift its focus to protecting "ecosystems", rather than putting money into individual projects for endangered animals.

Mr Garrett's speech follows a report by the Department of Climate Change that found global warming would severely threaten many native species.

Species Scientific Committee. The minister then decides whether he will fund a "recovery program" for that species based on its chance of success.

Mr Garrett discussed his recent decision to fund a recovery program for an endangered bat on Christmas Island and whether he could afford to spend the money given the animal's low chance of recovery.

He asked the scientists to help policy makers and the community "understand what is required in terms of public policy, resources and priorities". He said his new approach was one of a "clear-sighted pragmatist".

Mr Garrett also pre-empted claims of future budget constraints on environmental spending by saying the financial crisis was the best time to address such issues because he was "sufficiently aware that our wellbeing is inextricably linked to the health of our natural ecosystems".

Averil Bones, policy director for the WWF, said moving to a broader protection program would require more money in next year's budget. She said Australia could not protect only existing ecosystems as most were under severe threat, and the environment had to be restored through revegetation programs and species protection.

Phil Gibbons, a senior fellow at the ANU's Fenner School of Environment and Society, said focusing on ecosystems was the most cost-effective approach to saving animals. But he said Mr Garrett had recently spent large amounts on programs for politically popular animals, including \$10 million to help save the Tasmanian devil.

Mr Gibbons added that Mr Garrett and the Rudd Government had not yet been prepared to have a debate about "the links between economic growth and the damage we are doing to our natural ecosystems".

At present Australia registers species on endangered lists based on the advice of the Threatened

# Karzai faces his date with destiny



Calendar boy ... at an election gathering in Kandahar, a woman shows her support for President Hamid Karzai. Photo: AFP/Banaras Khan



PAUL MCGEOUGH IN AFGHANISTAN

WHEN he flounced onto the world stage in his braided coats of many colours in 2001, Hamid Karzai was hailed as the saviour of his traumatised nation. But battling to lock in a second term as president, he is now betraying the ideals for which so much Western blood and treasure has been spilled on the plains of Afghanistan.

A masterful consensus-builder in a cauldron of tribal, ethnic and religious politics, Karzai's pre-election vote-buying spree is seen as a sell-out

on women's rights and on the aspirations of many who fear the power of near-feudal warlords.

It has been widely suggested that some members of Karzai's family and his cronies are the chief beneficiaries of rampant corruption and drug-trafficking that seems immune to the presence of more than 100,000 foreign troops and the watching gaze of hundreds of diplomats.

The invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 was a direct response to the September 11 attacks—the start of the so-called war on terror. But with it came grand promises from the West of democracy, of the rights and institutions that are the pillars of a free society.

All that seemed to count for nothing when it was confirmed at the weekend that Karzai had defied world outrage by quietly codifying the right of some Shiite men to withhold food and sustenance from their wives if they did not respond to their demands for sex.

The wording of the bill was tinkered with after the US President, Barack Obama, declared it to be "abhorrent"—but it still gifts guardianship of children to

their fathers and grandfathers where their parents have opted for, or are pressured into, Shiite marriage contracts.

Human rights groups claim the law contravenes the Afghan constitution and international treaties. But more important to Karzai than the wrath of the West was his bid to stitch up the Shiite vote—about 20 per cent of the population—which he thinks can be delivered by the law's principle backer, the headline cleric Ayatollah Mohseni.

The deal is in keeping with the aftermath of a brutal gang-rape in the northern province of Samangan in 2005, in which the warlord perpetrators were jailed after evidence from 17 witnesses and after they had exhausted all avenues of appeal—except, that is, to the president. Karzai pardoned them after they had served two years of their time in what was seen as a bid to appease local powerbrokers.

The chapters into which Afghans split their recent history make them acutely aware of the perpetrators of the worst human rights abuses. The Taliban era was bad, but worst was the death and destruction of the early to mid 1990s, when the mujahideen factions fought senselessly for control of the country—and, in particular, the capital.

Many who became notorious and feared back then are now part of the presidential circle of power—and some of them rode

back into that circle on the back of American tanks in 2001, when they were co-opted by Washington with weapons and money to pursue al-Qaeda and to fight the Taliban.

"Some of the people from the 1990s, who the Afghan majority wanted to get rid of, are coming back to power through deals with Hamid Karzai and other candidates," the Afghan human rights commissioner, Nader Naderi, told the Herald. "Today there is a high tolerance of corruption and there is impunity for the crimes of the past and today's abuses of power."

It is widely assumed that Karzai has done deals with the six powerful warlords backing his candidacy. They include:

► Karzai's vice-presidential running mate, Marshal Mohammed Qasim Fahim, who had a standing private army estimated at 50,000-strong and who was so wary of Karzai in the early days of the post-Taliban order that he kept his tank barrels trained on Kabul.

► General Abdul Rashid Dostum, a northern Uzbek warlord who has a reputation for gross violence and stands accused of murdering hundreds of Taliban prisoners at the end of the 2001 war of invasion. On Sunday, Karzai allowed Dostum to return from exile in Turkey—in return for poll support.

► Mohammad Mohaqiq, a Continued Page 8

# Chinese whispers engulf Forrest

Ian Verrender  
Senior Business Writer

AS A mining magnate, Andrew "Twiggy" Forrest makes a great showman.

He has variously portrayed himself as the little guy battling the might of corporate Australia, an advocate for indigenous land rights, the discoverer of vast underground water reserves and the tycoon donating to help Victorian bushfire victims.

There is no doubting his determination, energy and chutzpah, which, for a while there through the resources boom, made him the richest man in the country.

However, those very same traits often attract suspicion and outright hostility.

Just yesterday Mr Forrest announced a multibillion-dollar deal to sell vast amounts of iron ore at a discount to China and to an arm of the Chinese Government to pump up to \$US6 billion (\$7.2 billion) of debt into his company, Fortescue Metals Group.

The way Mr Forrest told it, he had "broken that impasse" between Australia and China. He was "helping to facilitate an iron ore price that miners and steel producers can agree with in the medium term".

As ever, with a Forrest deal, the details were sketchy, and that is when the whispering began. He had undercut the iron ore price; he had sold Australia out; he had mortgaged Fortescue in what well could be a de facto sale of the company to China.

The deal Mr Forrest struck with Baosteel Group Corporation and the China Iron and Steel Association was done at a 35 per cent discount to last year's iron ore price. For months the rest of the industry—Rio Tinto, BHP and the Brazilian group Vale—have refused to take any more than a 33 per cent price cut, in line with the agreement reached with Japanese and Korean mills.

With four Rio Tinto executives languishing in detention in Beijing after this year's torrid negotiations, Mr Forrest's announcement was treated by the industry as a poke in the eye.

He has had an uneasy relationship with China. A Federal Court judge has yet to decide whether to ban him as a company director over a 2004 deal with China that never came to fruition.

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## INSIDE

### Warning on recovery

Kevin Rudd accused the Coalition of willing the nation towards recession as the Treasury boss, Ken Henry, called for an end to "premature" celebrations about surviving the global crisis and warned of a possible "second shock wave".  
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### Lunchbox alert for parents

Parents should not put ham or salami in their children's sandwiches because they increase the risk of cancer, experts warn. Poultry, low-fat cheese and hummus are said to be among the best alternatives.  
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### Groves faces legal action

Eddy Groves, the founder of the collapsed childcare company ABC Learning, and other directors may be sued for insolvent trading, a court heard yesterday.  
BUSINESSDAY, PAGE 19

### Kids wise up about internet

Parents worry about how children use the internet, but it seems kids are wiser than you might think, with schoolwork front of mind for most youngsters when they log on.  
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SYDNEY CITY fine, sunny 9°-19°  
TOMORROW: fine, sunny 9°-21°

LIVERPOOL fine, sunny 2°-19°  
TOMORROW: fine, sunny 1°-22°

PENRITH fine, sunny 3°-20°  
TOMORROW: fine, sunny 1°-22°

WOLLONGONG fine, winds 9°-18°  
TOMORROW: fine, sunny 9°-20°

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