

Prof Barry Jones ([00:00:00](#)):

It's a little chillier out there than we might've expected for this time in October, but Hey, such as the night changing nature of our climate who better for me to have the privilege to introduce to you a man who needs no introduction for a dedication to Phillip Adams than a man himself, a declared Australian living legend. I speak of course of Barry Jones. There are a few people in public life for whom the descriptor polymath is better suited. Barry Owen Jones is a writer, a lawyer, social activists, a quiz champion, former politician. And that's just the stuff that's on Wikipedia. Barry Owen Jones AC is the kind of blood we all want to have around. Avuncular warm, generous, deeply thinking. It's an incredible privilege to have Barry here, not only for this evening's event, but also in his own right to be delivering the 2016 Don Dunstan aeration on Saturday here tomorrow 4:00 PM in Barnard hall.

Prof Barry Jones ([00:01:12](#)):

My dear colleague, Heather Robinson will offer a more fulsome introduction to the living legend that is Barry giants at tomorrow's session. But for now on with the show, ladies and gentlemen do enjoy this evenings. Thoughtful reflections. Please give to introduce our guest of the evening. Please give your very best welcome from Adelaide to Barry Jones, Greg and friends first, thanks for the opportunity to make my day boo at the Adelaide festival of ideas. And as has been remarked, I've been asked to pay tribute to two iconic figures, Don Dunstan in the aeration tomorrow and tonight, Phillip Adams, but there's a certain interconnection particularly appropriate for the festival of ideas. Don Dunstan was an outstanding, deeply controversial politician, full of ideas and charisma, courageous and prepared to take opponents on inside and outside of the labor party on issues that he felt passionate about, such as opposition to white Australia, he would have turned 90 last month.

Prof Barry Jones ([00:02:38](#)):

He died in 1999. The year that the Adelaide festival ideas began Phillip Adams. And I both knew Don Dunstan, Phillip was very close, but my contact was less so, and Phillip played a central role in establishing south Australian film corporation, which produced some of our best films in the period of the revival or almost exhumation of the Australian feature film industry. And they worked together with great effect and I was on the Don Dunstan foundation. Phillip was it's patron. Now this is the ninth Adelaide festival ideas, and it's dedicated to Phillip and you will have read the dedication and the festival program referring to him as a one man festival of ideas. That certainly certainly true. If you look at his Wikipedia entry, he's described as humanist, social commentator, broadcaster, public intellectual and farmer. I thought I might say something about that background of Phillip that he, of course he was born in July, 1939, very important month because it also produced a fortnight later, John Howard, he was born in the Victorian regional title of Mary Barra, which mark Twain described as a railway station with a town attached.

Prof Barry Jones ([00:04:29](#)):

He lived in the Eastern suburbs of Melbourne to send to the state schools in east que Yarra park Wharf on west left El from high school in 1955 of his leaving certificate and was never contaminated by exposure to university education. When we met in the 1960s, we both had a burning cause mine was the abolition of the death penalty and his was the abolition of censorship. We supported each other's cause as well, we shared a passion for film and the revival of that film industry and what really brought us together. The, the beginning of 51 years of a very close friendship was actually an address that I had delivered that was broadcast and written about in the papers called the greater Australian and apathy

back in 1965 in Melbourne. And I was in it. I quoted something that Patrick White had written in an essay called the prodigal son.

Prof Barry Jones ([00:05:40](#)):

And this is what Patrick had said in all directions stretch the greater Australian emptiness in which the mind is the least of possessions in which the rich man is the important man in which the school master and the journalists rule what intellectual roost there is in which beautiful youths and girls stare at life through blind blue eyes in which human teeth fall like autumn leaves, the buttocks of cars grow hourly Garcia food means cake and steak muscles prevail of the March of material. Ugliness does not braiser quiver from the average nerves. It was the expectation of the average that made me panic. Most the Patrick White's woods. Anyway, the speech generated some comment and a fan letter from Phillip Adams. I I'd seen them at film festivals, read his reviews and knew that he was involved in advertising, but I'd never actually talked to him. And he was struck by my observation that in Australia, it was easier to win a knighthood for sporting achievements than for intellectual ones. Anyway, I felt telephone filled at once and we still at certain met for lunch beginning a very productive and close friendship.

Prof Barry Jones ([00:07:08](#)):

He'd been preoccupied with religious issues from the age of five and began worrying about who made God. He certain broke through the eggshell of his own limited experience and was lost in the stars brooding about infinity, his own his mother and stepfather inflicted some psychological damage with made him, as he said, a very lonely and mildly eccentric kid without a father or siblings who survived by reading, reading, reading, not to exalted William books, Biggles books, Superman comics, but at the age of 13, John Steinbeck's the grapes of Roth. What is described as his big idea in his teens was the beauty and ugliness were metaphors for life, a death good, or the evil and this linked to an immense fear of death. They drew a compulsion to seek meaning in the universe that is meaning outside the vine explanation. You always saw the juxtaposition of two civilizations, the civilization of life, of the civilization of death, of the culture of beauty and creativity against that of ugliness and self-pity would come up with an idea and then seek advice from teachers or librarians to find a book which confirmed it. And Ryan, Betty Madsen, since we at Elfin became his mentors Bertrand, Russell's why I'm not a Christian had a very powerful effect on him. He joined the Ultem branch of the communist party at the age of 15 and many opponents of the ABC. Think he's still in it.

Prof Barry Jones ([00:09:17](#)):

He was still at school politically. So you're influenced by the historian Jack leg and Steven Murray Smith. And they in turn are also encouraged to, but he left in 1956 after the Soviet invasion of Hungary, he went straight from school, into the advertising firm of Briggs and James, thanks to assistance from the Mogensen's. And he worked with Bruce Petty, Fred skipsy where's Walters, the painter and the filmmaker and teacher Brian Robinson, while still at school, he'd been a projectionist at the new theater in Flinders street. His passion for film was even more compelling than mine. And he became a habitual way of the Savoy theater in Melbourne, which showed foreign films. And he began writing film reviews, both for the guardian, the communist party of Australia weekly. That's not the Manchester guardian, that's the comments, potty guardian, and also the bulletin. Interesting juxtaposition and he became very involved in Melbourne's film culture.

Prof Barry Jones ([00:10:33](#)):

Now he had a all series of influences, one of them, of course, being Bruce Petty. And that was central to the development of the advertising campaign. A number of advertising campaigns, particularly life, the Innes, which very important ran for a long time. And he was a partner in Monaghan, Damon Adams, which was the first Australian owned advertising agency to threaten domination by the national guard we were, but solitary creatures, I made it was nice to hear that were warm and friendly and so on. And so Greg referred when, when he came up and that's that's half crew, but there's also a quality of the isolation and a quality of the exile you so low. We, we keep it concealed somewhat. And I suppose we're reasonably effective or he's very effective operating in networks and with audiences. And I've had some occasional successes, but not many, but we used to talk endlessly about existential issues, especially belief systems on the unknown.

Prof Barry Jones ([00:11:48](#)):

And then later on, of course he became very much involved when you had the revival of the of Commonwealth interest in the arts first through, through Harold Holt, then John Gorton amended very much advanced level with the golf Whitlam. Phillip and I were both involved, Phillip, particularly in Phillip, stayed on as the central figure in the Australia council. When it was at absolute his full flight, we worked together in the campaign to establish the film school. And if I could just tell you a funny story, it was the first time Phillip had been away on, he traveled. We were sent off by John Gorton to examine the film schools of the world, Peter Coleman, who was the third member of our group. And who is that says the editor of quadrant didn't want to go to Eastern Europe because he thought that there were a lot of people in powerful positions who would have been reading his editorials in quadrant and that his life might his life might be in jeopardy.

Prof Barry Jones ([00:13:05](#)):

So nothing would induce them to go behind the the, the iron curtain. But I just tell you one, one story, which I remember when we went to Moscow to see the great film school there, we met this, we had this extraordinary translator who was provided, who turned out to be after a while, turned out to be a dissonance, a Christian who typed up poetry by politically incorrect writers, such as Manville Staman act at Napa Tova and Pasternak on fine paper. And we, he was so outspoken that we began to worry that he was an Austrian provocateur and that he, we might finish up with some terrible reckless anti-Soviet act such as giving him Bibles with him books. Anyway, ultimately we didn't that, but we, we, we hired a car. We hired a Hertz car. It was in my name because Phillip and forgotten, organized an international driver's license, but he did most of the driving. And on one icy night, we drove ladder me as Schmidt, which is his name home to the trackless waste outside Moscow on our way back, because we had tickets to go to the ball Shaw, see you then Tootie the car skidded on the ice and ran into the back of a taxi. The crowd soon gathered it may well have been the most exciting event in their lives for years.

Prof Barry Jones ([00:14:44](#)):

But Phillip thoughtfully suggested that I should move into the driver's seat, but our host of witnesses said yet somebody somebody rang for the highway police who may have suspected the major crime. We were then directed to follow the patrol car. Until I skidded into a snowdrift, we stopped at a checkpoint where there was a vigorous debate between the highway police and the people police and all the grizzled officer was obviously saying the foreigners not worth the trouble worrying about them. The younger man was more determined and obviously saying regulations or regulations we don't enforce the law will have chaos once pushed out of the snowdrift. We went in convoy to a police station where we would be interrogated. Part of our problem was that we had no passports. We'd left them at the

Hungarian embassy so that our visas could be processed at when we got there, we could hear drunks banging on the cell walls.

Prof Barry Jones ([00:15:52](#)):

The prospect of cousin had 2d at the Bolshoi had failed. We waited and waited. I'd lost an official was some gold braid appeared. It was briefed on our situation. He then made a telephone call obviously to someone with even more gold bride seeking advice. And he kept repeating touristy apps, risky tourist, the asterisk. And I decided to intervene with more confidence than I actually felt. Nick touristy. Apparatchik now the officer repeated apparatchik into the telephone and approved really the magic passport. I had actually thought of this as meaning bureaucrats, you know, acting on behalf of the government, but they obviously thought we were partying.

Prof Barry Jones ([00:16:45](#)):

So we were given broad smiles, offered coffee and pointed in the right direction in Los Angeles. We we trust launched at Mar Meson because we were reliably informed that Austin Wells was a habitual way. Regrettably, we were there in his days off and we, we missed our chance to say, well, we did have some delicious meals. And Wells was a talismanic figure for both of us via overweight, frequently frustrated, but always aiming at the universal Phillips range of interests. And the way in which he picks up information is astounding. I just want to quote something that Eric beaches said this was some years ago, but it's absolutely accurate where he said, he's been around the media for decades. He looks more like a priest, the radio jock, he talks. He has an amazingly retentive memory is accessibly cerebral. He wears his biases on his skin.

Prof Barry Jones ([00:17:59](#)):

He polarizes opinion and opinion makers. He applies to startle perspectives whose views and discussions. He tracks by far the most significant interview subjects from around the globe to his program. He probes and banter with them as an equal gets himself properly briefed on the detail, gives his subjects time and space to be discursive. And therefore often illuminating. He breaks all the rules of talk radio. He's an Australian institution and an international caliber broadcaster who distinguish the airways, any radio station. Anyway, he is Phillip Adams. He's been properly, properly recognized by universities, by institutions. He's had very many awards. He's a very great Australian. I'm proud to be his close friend. We talk not quite every day. And I remember my editor, one state said, you must laugh a lot. I said, no, actually we grind a good deal more than we laugh. And there's a fair amount to grind about. But you in show in choosing Phillip as the dedicated E of this festival ideas, the ninth in the sequence. And I, and I'm so delighted that the up and up and running again, you couldn't have chosen a better dedicate E of I invite you to join me in applauding the dedicated he feel about them and invite him up to the plate.

Speaker 2 ([00:19:39](#)):

It's not often, it's not often that you get to hear your own obituary. Thanks dad.

Philip Adams ([00:19:51](#)):

Oh, and thank you, Greg. And thank you, festival burn undeserved on them. Undeserved on us, I think are probably the nicest ones to get let's now leave Adelaide and head for Hollywood known for over a century as the dream factory manufacturing, filmic fantasies for both domestic audience and for much of the world. And also a cold run for madness as a test, by for example, the Manson family, the OJ

Simpson case and Scientology Hollywood remains headquarters for supernatural phenomena. And during the seventies, the likes of Shirley McClain and Sylvester Stallone, and indeed Prado thespian, Ronald Reagan would famously confuse past roles with past lives, thus encouraging a rapture around reincarnation with the LA neighborhood, a bounding with newly minted religions and close encounters with extra terrestrials a committee of fine minds. The likes of Carl Sagan, Isaac has them off and various categories of Nobel Laureate covered us around cycop the committee for the scientific investigation of claims of the paranormal.

Philip Adams ([00:21:19](#)):

These days known simply as CSI the committee for skeptical inquiry, and I'm seeking their help tonight in making skeptical inquiries about politics. I agreed with Dick Smith that we needed a local branch of psychology, a particular concern work or cancer quakes. People were being deflected from life-saving procedures by criminal manipulation of the [inaudible] with, for example, size psychic surgery. Now, this is a procedure we're in the psychic surgeon makes an incision in the belly of a cancer patient using no scalpel, just his bare fingers, which seemed to disappear into the, into the word and the sudden gush of blood. And lo and behold, he conjures a piece of a malignant tissue, and I've been taught to replicate this fraud and should someone in the audience be willing to disrobe and lie here on stage? I will demonstrate perhaps a little later in the evening. We talk of a time when scientists were being tricked by Kahneman within the sacrosanct laboratories, you read together was the most skillful confusing science.

Philip Adams ([00:22:43](#)):

So convincing scientists, indeed of his marvelous abilities to melt metal with his mind, and as well demonstrates something called remote viewing his ability to see insight and onward in a distant room, even when both the room and the envelope from the other side of the planet. So it was time to call him. Geller's nemesis a gentleman with a somewhat unfortunate name of Randy James Randy stage name, the amazing rounding, perhaps more appropriate to a porn star. Dick brought James to Australia where he and I and Richard Carlton offered \$50,000 to anyone who under reasonable scrutiny in disguise under Randy scrutiny could demonstrate any form of psychic power. Now in parenthesis that offer would subsequently be increased to a medium, a million dollars. And countless tests have been undertaken in many countries over almost half a century and not one person, not one has been able to prove even the most common place, psychic power like telepathy, Dick Richard. And I took the view that we'd be having to hand over the 50,000. If someone could, for example, demonstrate the popular Australian agricultural skill of water dividing. Now there'll be said, water diviners are not fruits. The true believers absolutely convinced with the gifts. And it comes as a great surprise to them. Sometimes verging on the tragic, when it is demonstrated to them that the diluted now, what does this have to do with politics?

Philip Adams ([00:24:34](#)):

The story begins in office, where we were holding a press conference and every network had sent a reporter and the cameraman back then it was the ABC SBS nine, seven, and 10, the crews crowded into Smith's office. And first up, Randy explained how he'd unmasked, urea and effortlessly survived. A number of subsequent libel actions brought by the Israeli conjurer as a professional magician, James could see what scientists failed to see because he knew the tricks of the trade mid conference. Randy saw that I was about to light a cigarette, grabbed the offending to promote lips, dirty habit, placed it on desk. He then told us he would demonstrate psychokinesis the ability of the human brain to move solid

objects. And he wandered around the room, rubbing his fingers on people's clothing, leather jacket of a cameraman, the lapel of a report, a suit.

Philip Adams ([00:25:37](#)):

And he finally found a textile. He deemed appropriate and asked us to cluster around. Remember we had two categories of trained observers, the journalist and the camera that people paid to see things with clarity, Randy, once more rubbed his fingers on the fabric of his choice and extended them toward the cigarette, his fingers, a tremble with pent-up energy, the zoom lenses clustered to view the goings on from every angle, dozens of eyes focusing intently on the fingers and the. And as Randy continued to spiel, lo and behold, the cigarette began to tremble then to move up the desk down the desk, rolling left, rolling, right gasps. He then asked me assembly to explain how he'd done it. Everyone had a theory, mostly involving static, electricity that sort of charged generated. When you walk in in synthetic carpet, you know, you approach the door unlock when you get a mild PSAP. No, he said it was much, much simpler than that I blowing.

Philip Adams ([00:26:56](#)):

And he demonstrated how whilst talking nonstop, he'd managed to emit little puffs that had propelled the cigarette. And none of us, not one of us had noticed Randy pointed it out. This was a classic demonstration of the what's basic to all magic misdirection. All of you were focused on my fingertips in the cigarette. Not one of you looked at my mouth and for me, it was a Eureka moment for that moment. I realized that misdirection, the basis of all conjuring is perhaps the greatest tool in politics, politics at every level, from the gubernatorial to the global provincial to the planetary later, I'd watch an associate of Randy's stage name. David Copperfield vanish the entire statue of Liberty in front of the sizeable crowd gathered on its tiny island. Once again, dead simple. If you understood the principle of misdirection managing the audience's attention is of course the aim of all theater.

Philip Adams ([00:28:05](#)):

And it's the aim of almost all politics misdirection takes advantage of the limits of the human mind in order to give the wrong picture of false memory. Now, research suggests that the mind of a magician's audience, and I think this applies to a politicians can barely concentrate on one thing at a time, which makes it easy for the magician or the politician to manipulate ideas or perceptions and lead the audience towards a wrong conclusion. Now, it doesn't matter whether you're performing table magic with a blown cigarette or three-card Monte or a major stage illusion. Mr. Action is the tool and the trick. But before I give some primary examples of its application in the illusionism of politics, that has recognized that it's a basic device in the animal kingdom with Mr. Action, taking a form of camouflage, and we see it in the bull fight.

Philip Adams ([00:29:03](#)):

It's an interesting fact that bulls don't see red. It's the one color they're blind to whether it's their own gore or that of a gourd Toria door. The color has nothing to do with it. It's the misdirection of that flapping Cape, having been goaded and quilted by the Picador as the poor brute lunges, hopelessly at the cake, completely failing to observe in-store mentor. And we, the public are a bit like that go to by the picker doors of shock, jock rebuy, the strident commentary that we become as blundering and as blind to the truth as possible. If the Jews did not exist, it would be necessary to invent a quotation attributed to Hitler Sartre, but at the same point in regard to antisemitism, and he was paraphrasing

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Voltaire, if God does not exist, it would be necessary to invent it. So we did. And for Nike it's like myself, I'd have to suggest there was probably misdirection at the resurrection for centuries for millennia.

Philip Adams ([00:30:14](#)):

Jews were the most popular racial or religious scapegoat. And we currently see variations of the in relation to Muslims and Mexicans and the Trump campaign. We've seen it applied for decades in regard to our own rabid response to refugees. We sort a few weeks ago in a poll suggesting that Australians, except if you like the Trump Hansen policy of restricting Muslim immigration, in our case, nothing short of a fully fledged reintroduction of white Australia policy, which was our preemptive version of ethnic cleansing. We saw it in kids, overboard politics doesn't get more magical like David Copperfield, Donald Trump wants the statue of Liberty to disappear along with all it symbolizes and hear politicians and all parties major or minor have managed to disappear. The ethics that decency their compassion. Now you see it. Now you don't misdirection is built into language. Asylum seekers become queue jumpers or illegals.

Philip Adams ([00:31:26](#)):

Many of us will recall if not from, if they weren't there at the time, the image of Chamberlain holding up a piece of paper and saying peace in our time, there was an echo of that image. When Joseph McCarthy wiped the list in the air, insisting it contained the names of 200 communists working in the state department. It was the reddest of red herrings. And there's an argument that what McCarthy was holding was his laundry list. Lyndon James Johnson famously infamously is the Tonkin incident of August the second, 1964 to justify his massive escalation in Vietnam and the alleged attack on the USS Maddix that we've known for a long time didn't occur. It was if you like a Porky or to use a more Australian piece of vernacular, a furphy, but like the Reichstag fire and other classic piece of misdirection, and was more than enough to energize an ideological and military onslaught, a massive escalation in one of the most appalling and unnecessary conflicts of the modern era.

Philip Adams ([00:32:38](#)):

We call it the Vietnam war. They call it the American, another appalling and unnecessary war involving both the us and us bushes middle east adventurism George W. Bush was adventurism. You will recall that invasion was enthusiastically endorsed by the coalition of the willing, the coalition of the killing in which John Howard played a significant role Bernstein of Woodward and Bernstein fame became an increasingly conservative commentator in his latter years and was the ultimate Washington DC insider. And he wrote a series of books on the progress of Georgia Dougherty's invasion. And I cannot forget him telling me on late night live, that he discovered that Howard was not simply a sort of a supporter, but one of the most enthusiastic and influential advocates, the man of steel as George w called him at bushes ear and endlessly insistently, the Manor seal said Walt, that ear wanted to hear and splits was also on the program, quite the arguing, the coast for the non-existence of weapons of mass destruction.

Philip Adams ([00:34:03](#)):

Now, most of us in this room knew what the president of the United States and the prime ministers of Australia and great Britain claimed not to know chosen, not to know that Sudan nuclear program had been abandoned. And you saw two, if not beaten into power shares as at least become scrap metal, but what a magnificent piece of misdirection that was a war opposed by a majority of the human population, protested in unprecedented mass marches, and so many major cities, you went ahead justified by a total total fiction weapons of misdirection, a fiction, which to this day is endlessly recycled

by bushes bullies, the neo-cons Blair and Howard, and the deafening chorus of Australia's right-wing commentary it. But nine 11 was in and out and of itself a monstrous act of misdirection, not by those who perpetrated, but by those who used it to justify an immense and ongoing kilometer, you will recall that George w insisted the nine 11 had been a project of sun damage sayings to said that war exists to teach Americans geography.

Philip Adams ([00:35:33](#)):

But to this day, I doubt the Bush could point to Iraq on the map and in parenthesis on sure that Trump couldn't, but it was known within minutes of the event that most of the the plotting and planning came, not from the Rockies, but from Saudis, from a country with which George H. Bush had an uncomfortable, because business affiliation you'd been lardons ethnicity would be ignored. The Iraqis would be beaten into submission, by shock and or mission accomplished Washington updated the domino theory and use the falling towers as the biggest dominoes in history. And those dominoes continue to talk to this day. Misdirection takes so many forms. Gail Pissarro, my executive producer, my beloved dominatrix sitting in the front row took the program to Timmerman square on one of its most significant anniversaries. And puny efforts at broadcasting were interrupted and then closed down.

Philip Adams ([00:36:40](#)):

And Blake nightclub was hustled away under threat of arrest. But the strange thing was there were hardly any Chinese in the square that day. And not simply because of the police and militia presence, but because of misdirection on a grand scale, the children of Beijing knew little and cared. Less of gentlemen they'd formed huge crowds elsewhere in the city, in the shopping malls, we left a vacant tournament to watch the young, the rising middle class of China crowding into the big name stores, just a few blocks away. And it has to be said that around the world, shopping has become one of the great misdirections the younger, more likely to hyperventilate with excitement that the news of a new iPhone than they are to protest a political outrage. And the insatiable interest in celebrity is a link. A term of misdirection. If shopping is a new religion, celebrities are its priesthood as media cashes in on such human brand names as the, as the Kardashians and other human variants of the meretricious and the meaningless political responses, adult and distracted.

Philip Adams ([00:38:05](#)):

And we are now witnessing that's apotheosis, a world we're in brand names and celebrities, and the unreality of reality TV overlap to produce the Dawn where someone of soaring stratospheric stupidity is so dangerously close to becoming the most powerful man on earth, endlessly, easily distracted. We seem to have the attention span of, and the biggest issues. The shelf life of yogurt executions and barley are forgotten almost as soon as they occur tourism, rebounds drug shipments, boom. And we forget the context of everything, which is why we recently chose to misunderstand the responses of locals to an Australian military ceremony in Vietnam. Mr. Direction is everywhere. Hitchcock invented his own version. The MacGuffin to Alfred McGovern was something you introduced to a thriller to distract from the momentum of the plot. A false clue. Another version is the straw man. The Glade plebiscite, the gay marriage website is a classic case.

Philip Adams ([00:39:26](#)):

The most cynical of maneuvers, a sort of legal filibuster, which takes us away from Trump to Turnbull. One could suggest that Malcolm's beliefs. So passionately expressed over the years have all been misdirections and that none of them manifest themselves as policy is passionate belief in the Republic.

And I would remind you that he and Barry were the double act, driving that forget it is passionate concern for climate change gone with the wind, gone with the wind power, such policies, such alleged enthusiasms are to be dismissed as though they were nothing more than puffery sort of puffery that moves cigarettes around the world. Political confidence is not merely eroding, but collapsing. You see it in Trump. We saw it in Brexit. We see it in the surge of popularity for our Billy tea party. One nation. We lose faith in our democratic structures, in our growth institutions, in our churches, healthy skepticism, morphed into cynicism and into self-destructive almost suicidal voting behavior.

Philip Adams ([00:40:48](#)):

And it occurs to me that the very term newspaper is misdirection, as God knows, that contained less this news and more and more views of increasing toxicity. We are so easily distracted and our increment is willful. We collaborate in our own decline. We seek not to know we have deaf ears, blind eyes, and that is why this festival there's little festival, the generator. So many others around the country plays an honorable role. You will not be misdirected here. And your mere presence indicates a desire for the truth. I was interviewed for the ABC breakfast show. And I was talking about my affection for disorganization and also made another point that in a sense, thinking is fun. And I thought about that for a second. I said, yes, tossing ideas around is at least as much fun as tossing a football, enjoy the sport of thought.

Philip Adams ([00:41:54](#)):

I think that was a very good ad lib. And I congratulated myself on the air for saying it gold medalist of the sport of Thor, Barry. Nice. And to add to those listening, the largest current use of misdirection involves climate change. It is now over 30 years since Barry and I through our commission for the future, introduced the notion of the greenhouse effect to people in this country 30 years since we organized Australia's first national and international company at the time, did he at last was an issue that would unite us all that would become truly by tri quad partisan, but that was not to be similar arguments of pseudoscience. The cigarette companies deployed to deny the links between smoking and lung cancer have been brought into play. As we try to stop the world from smoking itself to death. Ian Lowe, who was one of the early CEOs was telling me just a few weeks back that he recognizes the names of some of the scientists.

Philip Adams ([00:43:08](#)):

The same ones that signed up to defend cigarettes are involved now in the misdirection, largely funded by the fossil fuel companies. Another form of misdirection that we see in applied is the false binary, the false dichotomy, the either or fallacy the fantasy of false choice. We see it applied principally in the debate on refugees and we fall for it. The fake dichotomy that there is no choice other than reservoir or the red carpet. And this misdirection leads to the magical disappearance of compassion, human decency, and indeed international obligations. Read my lips, no new taxes. Who's afraid to spoken to the, by the then American presidential candidate, George H. Bush during the 1988 contest, like some of the promises by Tony Abbott, we learned that the words that we read on politician's lips are unlikely to be the total truth, anything but the truth, but what I learned that day from the amazing Randy, and what I asked you to consider on this occasion is to watch their lips anyway, to watch them very, very closely. If only to see if they're blowing. Thank you.

Speaker 2 ([00:44:42](#)):

[Inaudible]

Prof Barry Jones ([00:44:43](#)):

Philip you're, you're much love particularly in this in this audience because I think it's true that Adelaide has certainly the period of dancing and thereafter had a passionate interest in ideas. And I think your message, your analytical approach, your, your careful balancing of different points of view and so on is so rare in the media now that people will feel immensely encouraged when they, when they hear you. And when they see you and you, you have a very calming effect on them as they about to go to sleep on four on four nights a week. Since you mentioned James, Randy, I should just say one more thing. I got to know Randy too, because I, and I went along some of his functions and he, he did a tremendous demonstration in Melbourne on one occasion. I don't think you were there where he demonstrated this mysterious surgery processing and Ghibli, very sort of Tufts down on the floor.

Prof Barry Jones ([00:45:57](#)):

And so it's all very dramatic, but then, then he also did a very good number. He did a very good number on the on the shroud of Turin, which use very sort of irritated by. And he got a volunteer. It wasn't me, but he got a volunteer to lie down on a, on a table. And he he covered the person's face with with black shoe Polish. And see, he then got a cloth. You see him put the cloth, put the cloth over the face, see, and the point was, you see that you bought a face and you then removed the cloth and you could see that the ears were stuck out like that. You see ad very different, very different from the image, which is in fact like a photographic, like a photographic image, because it's two dimensional. Once you started to do it in a three-dimensional way, then you've got ears coming up like that. And it all makes it very, very dubious. Indeed.

Philip Adams ([00:47:05](#)):

He he asked that office were there. Anyone had a pack of cards and Dick secretary brought out the most disgusting pack of cards with yogurt and raspberry jam over them. And she pointed the cheap pied patients at lunchtime she'd need to working for Dick. And Randy grabbed them and asked me to shuffle. Now I don't play cards. And most of the experts shuffled it, but I did my best. And then Randy cut the packet a couple of times. I shuffled again. And then he said, I want you to use your mental power now to deal out two piles of cards. I want you to sense whether they're red or black and place them appropriately. So I'm there I go, red like red, red, black, red. I went through the pack and then Randy turned them over face up. And guess what I'd done? One was all red. One was all black. And I was telling Barry this backstage, Randy then took me backstage and magicians never reveal how they do their tricks. He took me backstage and show me how and showed me how he did it. And I forgotten [inaudible].

Prof Barry Jones ([00:48:35](#)):

So over the years you've interviewed me on a number of occasions and I've never really quite had the chance to interview you, but there, there are a number of, so don't

Philip Adams ([00:48:46](#)):

Go crazy with all the, be gentle with all the

Prof Barry Jones ([00:48:50](#)):

Thousands of conversations that we've had over the over the last 51 years. Something that I don't really fully understand, but I think the audience will be interested in is how you process information, how you get that grasp. May you, you work, you had no formal tertiary education. I didn't get

Philip Adams ([00:49:17](#)):

My leaving. And when you eat Mr,

Prof Barry Jones ([00:49:21](#)):

But you are a classic autodidact, you've you, you've learned a tremendous amount. Your knowledge of the world is absolutely prodigious, but it hasn't been because you've pursued a particular discipline, you know, in a rigorous way with, with a skill faculty around. Now, first of all, you began reading and you've been a voluminous reader, but is reading now your primary source of information, you already get more from the web. You get more from what you were listening, listening to program, watching DVD. Where does the, where does the knowledge intake

Philip Adams ([00:50:02](#)):

Come from? If you're talking about the program it's is it's got a lot of very talented people working on it. It's easy. It's you know, I'm provided with wonderful briefs well-researched, but I often make my producers very cranky because I often hardly read it for the simple reason that it is not my job to know it is my job to find out. And so it's a very easy thing to ask questions. I was putting out to the breakfast interviewer, I'm sorry. Forgive me. I can't recall his name this morning that at least I have an infinite curiosity. I think that's what makes human beings human, you know, fast capacity for curiosity. And the reason I don't think I would have done any good at university is because I'm interested in everything. I deal with thousands of academics who know a huge amount about a little, and I prefer to belong to those, to the large crowd of people who know a little about a lot and late night live, of course, is a gift from heaven. It has to be, I mean, who else on earth anyway, as a program where you can talk about anything to anybody anywhere now, when the ABC management see me in the corridor, as I occasionally unavoidably do, and they ask, how am I feeling? Yeah, they're waiting. They're waiting to hear the glad tidings that I'm about to retire because the program is costs a few Bob to put to air, but I'm not going to retire. Barry. I intend to

Speaker 2 ([00:52:02](#)):

[Inaudible].

Philip Adams ([00:52:02](#)):

I intend to die during an interview. Pause to read this one.

Prof Barry Jones ([00:52:10](#)):

Good. I had said something along more or less the same ones, but look that explanation no matter how no express doesn't altogether satisfy me, because the fact is though that when you are interviewing some dude who's immensely skilled in some area, or seems to me, and he will throw out a line, which is very unlikely that you've been briefed on. Somehow you extract something and say, but look, that's not consistent with what you said in some other book or something. So that you've obviously got an extraordinary internal data bank. I thought where's

Philip Adams ([00:52:53](#)):

The Reese. I think that's true. Yeah. I seem to be able to, I can't remember what happened yesterday, but I seem to remember the terrible clarity, what happened 30 years ago. And I don't, I don't remember names. I'm not even very good at remembering faces. I've almost got that all over sex problem of very poor facial recognition, but God, I remember ideas,

Prof Barry Jones ([00:53:20](#)):

But film itself would have been a profound source of information,

Philip Adams ([00:53:26](#)):

Not film. I must always publicly confessed to this. I'm totally addicted to one journal. And that is the New York review of books, which I think is the greatest magazine on earth. There may be others, but if there are, I don't know of them, but Gail and I, and the rest of the team, we look at tons of stuff coming in. Oh, every publisher on earth is desperate to get on the program. Why? Because there's so few places left anywhere where ideas are discussed. There's like not live in this. She had led festival of ideas, basically, that's it.

Prof Barry Jones ([00:54:08](#)):

I agree with you about the New York review. Although I'd put in a bit of a plug, I think the London review of books has really extraordinary stuff. And one of the things I think I mentioned to you that I thought was particularly wonderful in, there were two recent articles in the London review books by Elliot Weinberg, who one of the smartest American analysts. And he did the first article was about the 16 alternative candidates for the Republican nomination. And the second was on the actual public and convention itself that he was making the point that if you went through the 16 other nominations, that about 10 of them were actually worse than Trump in any kind of, I mean, seriously and singularly that I thought this was a basketball rotation quoting about Ted Cruz. The Senator from from Texas had said even his Republican Senate colleagues routinely apply the epithet loads to him in the same way that the term fleet is applied to Achilles.

Philip Adams ([00:55:25](#)):

One of the odd things is that the great joys of the program do not necessarily come from interviewing someone incredibly famous. And, you know, we've knocked off a few of those. We've had Gorbachov, we've had well, any number of Nobel laureates and and major figures, even, even Henry Kissinger, I think crept onto the program on one occasion, but it comes from talking to someone who's probably never done a rodeo program before and they never do it again, but, but they've had an idea. They've written a thesis, published a book, and it is so fresh. And so exhilarating that that often is the most pleasurable there's no trick takes absolutely no skill to interview a gore of Adele, what it does now, because he's dead. But when he often came on, it was literally true that you could ask him a question at six minutes, past 10, go outside for a smoke, walk up, have a couple of coffees, wander back and say, thank you. And the next day people say that was a wonderful thing

Speaker 2 ([00:56:41](#)):

You did

Philip Adams ([00:56:42](#)):

At the other end of the scale. I can't resist telling the story. There was the worst interview ever. And that was when I was promised that this incredibly important Buddhist monk for me and mom was going to be gracious with his presence. And I asked the obvious question, does he speak English perfectly? And this was at a time when the monks were in fact representing the greatest challenge to the military. So he walked into the studio and he was shimmering with goodness. He had you know, halos and radians pouring forth. He was heavily burdened

Prof Barry Jones ([00:57:25](#)):

With every mention, all bead,

Philip Adams ([00:57:28](#)):

He looked fantastic and he sat opposite me and he smiled. And I started to talk to him and I realized that not only did he not speak English, he didn't understand. Now that's the sort of the range of possibilities from a Christopher Hitchens who could talk literally was blind drunk as he did week after week, or and to that gentlemen it's and it's one of the great virtues, one of the great delights of life, because you never know what's coming up and you can really extricate yourself from a crisis,

Prof Barry Jones ([00:58:10](#)):

But you spoke about where you've got a new, fresh, perhaps unknown talent who somehow finds themselves on your program, but how do they get there? What's, what's the, the step that gets them in. How do you, how do you get through the magic portal? Well,

Philip Adams ([00:58:29](#)):

Gail and the team are constantly receiving suggestions. We PA I pass on your suggestions on a regular basis. And I think we've even done a couple of them. It was bad, you know, bad weeks. And we were desperate. So the team sit around and they called you Tate and toss ideas around. And then you've got to try and land them somewhere. Wasn't as easy as you think. We're looking through, the people appearing this weekend and there was one particular, one particular performer. She remained nameless who won't do it because he doesn't want to be recalled how peculiar. So and very often you suddenly get no shows. A number of times when, where it's six minutes past 10 and the putative guests is entirely vanished, presumably bodily abducted by aliens. So it's, it's the whole process is well, it's gloriously ad hoc and dangerously unpredictable,

Prof Barry Jones ([00:59:33](#)):

But you've presumably got a standby mechanism while obviously you've got a sandbox mechanism where you've got some hallowed interview from an earlier date. Well,

Philip Adams ([00:59:43](#)):

When we go into panic mode, which happens every two or three days and Gail will be on the other side of the big thick sheet of glass. And I can see the last vestige of color draining from your face. We then rapidly, not me. She rapidly goes through the backlog and finds her an interview of approximately the right length, which will, which will drop in. But it's you see one, there are wonderful programs on our end, like background briefing in which the lead time for the one story is weeks and weeks and weeks. And you can edit everything well, live to air 90% of the time. And when we're not live to where it's

usually for the convenience of the guest, rather than for the convenience. So it's always, you always skating on thin ice. And I think that intensifies the interest of the participant.

Philip Adams ([01:00:44](#)):

And I usually like to admit to the listener that we have a crisis. Cause I think they get it. They understand them and perhaps even sympathize. I've got another story on I'm compelled to tell them that was when I spent a dirty weekend with Gorbachev and he had a translator whose name escapes me, who had been done everything. We'd go for job everywhere, including the meetings of the Reagan, very important stuff. And he had his type quality. He was, he's almost wasn't there. They seem to barely exist in his own. Right. And Gorbachev is very like Hawk. He's a hugger, you know, the way that's right, Bob [inaudible]

Prof Barry Jones ([01:01:28](#)):

That you've interviewed up in Brisbane,

Philip Adams ([01:01:31](#)):

That's tracking where they, so anyway, I finally I'm spending an hour with Gorbachov and the translator has pulled out his rather Chevy wristwatch, and he's staring at it hopelessly, waiting for the Dow to pass and Gorbachev who I suspect speaks English perfectly, but uses this as a delaying tactic was taking this time to formulate the perfect answers. And I noticed after a while that the translator was giving the answers before Gorbachev had made them

Speaker 2 ([01:02:06](#)):

[Inaudible].

Philip Adams ([01:02:06](#)):

So I said to me, Kyle, we're on first name terms. I said, let's just go for a walk around the block and leave it to the translator. Perfectly true story.

Prof Barry Jones ([01:02:22](#)):

Yeah. I got a vast curiosity. You've you've traveled very extensively. You've seen a tremendous amount of the world and so on. What are the areas that you feel uncomfortable with that you don't, you're not interested in? Is there any sec? What are the sections of life?

Philip Adams ([01:02:41](#)):

Well, as Barry, I am entirely inartfully ignorant of sport. I know nothing about popular culture since the death of Johnny Ray, I'm afraid side. Oh, I'm not sure he is dead, but he hasn't had any hits land. So you and I both have the same areas where everything is a total blank. But if I was to go through the topics from say, accountancy to zoology, I am pretty ignorant of almost all of them. I did two series filmed in south Australia with Paul Davies, who was also had had this role at a previous festival. And I sat out in the distance and we talked about the big questions. And at the end of 12 television shows, I was none the wiser to any, I don't get a lot of things I pretend I do because it's important to be an authority figure, but usually I'm more ignorant at the end of an interview than I was at the beginning as I feeling the same way now.

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Prof Barry Jones ([01:03:54](#)):

But you sounded very plausible. You said

Philip Adams ([01:03:58](#)):

It's very easy to fake plausibility. It's like faking sincerity that anyone can do it. Donald Trump can do it.

Prof Barry Jones ([01:04:08](#)):

Well. I mean, the actually you're in, in, in great company on the business of being bored with sport, I think Dunstan was in that category. Certainly, certainly Bob Carr. Yes. And certainly

Philip Adams ([01:04:21](#)):

Bob Hawke, Bob slightly different category. Yeah. That's one of the reasons I liked Don liked him very much. Did I tell you about my first meeting with him in his office? No. Okay. He called me over to have a chat about the film industry. He noticed that we were doing things about it and he wanted Adelaide to be involved. And he wanted to talk to me about his big idea, which was to have a film laboratory here to process rushes. And I said, well, well, I finished up explaining to him the brushes meet rush, and it will take an awful long time to get the, the rush from Sydney to Adelaide and back again. And that probably wasn't a good idea. So we'd cooked up the south Australian film corporation, which we did through misdirection because of no stage could he admit to even his own cabinet? That that was the plan we pretended the misdirection was that it would exist simply to make government documentaries for the various ministries. Anyway, I arrived in his office and I've never forgotten this. Don approached me from the other side of this vast amphitheater with a hand extended on, which was a famous ring, the very famous ring with a large blue stone. And I wasn't sure whether I was meant to shake the hand or kiss the ring.

Philip Adams ([01:05:40](#)):

And then we

Philip Adams ([01:05:40](#)):

Sat in a conversation, Pete, and he turned on the, it was either a blouse [inaudible] radio. It was a massive German thing at full volume. And I've caught it out to the premier that was just making the conversation very difficult. And he said, that's because the permanent head is eavesdropping.

Philip Adams ([01:06:01](#)):

You said he's

Philip Adams ([01:06:01](#)):

On the other side of the wall with the glass press too. That was my introduction to south Australia.

Speaker 2 ([01:06:10](#)):

[Inaudible]

Prof Barry Jones ([01:06:11](#)):

I was thinking when thinking about Don dance and when he became, it took him 14 years, African Brazilians of the site pallet really come the labor leader. And he only succeeded because a strategy may have been worked out by Clyde Cameron to get rid of Frank Walsh, who was the premier and the, the other who though the story about the surprise prison, that there was a labor party conference. And Todd Cameron had brought in the, the the Phillips retirement radio grab for Frank watch. And Frank didn't know he was retiring. Okay. Once you'd received the radio grab, I think you got the message that maybe, maybe, maybe he was retiring after all.

Philip Adams ([01:07:01](#)):

Perhaps it wasn't a blouse point, perhaps it wasn't well, punk the radio, it might've been this radio that he turned up anyway. Well, it's lovely to be here. And the festivals very sweet to me, to an elderly gentlemen and you father, I thank you for your restless, but basically congenial interrogation.

Prof Barry Jones ([01:07:21](#)):

Okay. Well, we, one of the things we, one of the many things we have in common is I think we're both obsessed with time management and getting the most, getting the most out,

Philip Adams ([01:07:33](#)):

Well, our heightened awareness of mortality. And as you pointed out, I've been, I've been, I've had that awareness literally since I was four. Yeah. I can remember the catalyst [inaudible] discovery that of death and that at some point in the not too distant, I was going to it and I became hypnotized by the notions of eternity and infinity. So that to me was the moment which set me going set my clock, racing to me. One of the great metaphors in literature is captain hook and Peter pan. Do you remember he's followed by a crocodile and the has already eaten one of captain hook's arms into the hook. And within the crocodile is an alarm clock, ticking, ticking, ticking. I have that crocodile here tonight and within its tummy, I can hear the clock ticking. Now that was half a snow. It was 65, 70 years ago. Now you and I both know that the clock is ticking very loudly and very fast. And this to me, mortality and I wrote this decades ago is an aphrodisiac for living. And I think even the dwindling amount of time left for us, isn't exuberant, you're turning up books at a terrify, right? Even your publish a concubine [inaudible]

Prof Barry Jones ([01:09:05](#)):

Well, yes, I must confess in my 85th year, I'll have had three books, three books published this year,

Philip Adams ([01:09:12](#)):

But if you live another 10 years, you'll know your life, silver Australia will be groaning under your still will ahead of me.

Prof Barry Jones ([01:09:18](#)):

You've published 21 books published 11. Lot

Philip Adams ([01:09:22](#)):

Of them, one of them are collections of columns go that's easy,

Prof Barry Jones ([01:09:27](#)):

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But I think I've missed a thought of a mortality and a time running out. And so on. This might be exactly the time to say it's almost getting close to Milo time and add to thank Phillip for his contribution to so much of Australian life at, especially for the wonderful Adelaide festival of ideas.