

NTU - Faculty of Law

The Fish, The Writer and the Undercover Reporter

NTU Faculty of Law lecturer, Stephen Gray, whose research interests include intellectual property and Aboriginal people and the legal system, was recently presented with the Jessie Litchfield for his book Lungfish. A Balance undercover reporter sets out to find out more.

BALANCE UNDERCOVER REPORTER: Congratulations on winning the Jessie Litchfield Award for your book *Lungfish*. Tell me, Stephen, where is the connection between a university lecturer in law (you), living in the tropics (the book's context) and the aquatically themed title of the book?

STEPHEN GRAY: Alex Lungwicz has a problem – in common with every other sensitive person of his generation. How to live, now? Like his half-developed namesake, the lungfish, trapped in an evolutionary glitch between water and earth, Alex feels unable to adapt successfully to his recently altered environment.

BUR: Sounds like your average recently-recruited-from-the-south lecturer. Is the character Alex Lungwicz anyone we know?

SG: Certainly no one at NTU. A young lawyer, he has left Melbourne and come to Darwin on Australia's Northern frontier to work as a "lawman in a lawless town". But, finding the conflicts and contradictions of life as an articulated clerk irresoluble, he has declined to be admit-

ted to practise law and gropes towards self-acceptance through an erratic work life and series of relationships.

BUR: More clues! Sounds like too many people I know. What sort of relationships?

SG: There is Cordelia, who loves Alex and leaves him; Marco, a former flatmate lately returned from Africa where he contracted marriage with a young woman infected with the HIV virus; Lisa, a legal activist with her own inner demons; and Terry Tatham, the senior lawyer whose practices lead Alex to despair at being able to practise law and retain any shred of self-respect.

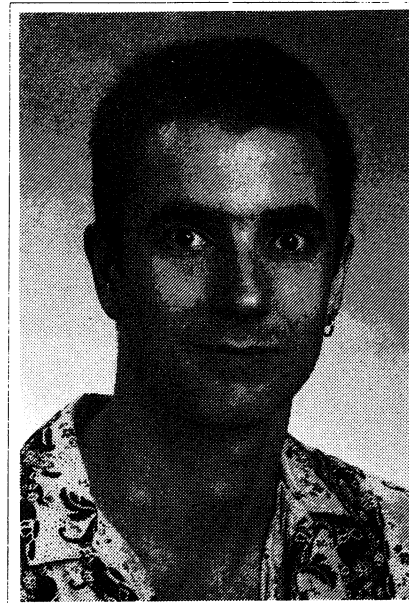
BUR: Wow. A real Darwinian tragedy! So what's the method to his challenge?

SG: Alex makes empty gestures at an authority he detests but cannot challenge. He wants to atone for who he is by the meaningless gesture of destroying himself. His challenge is to find a new way – to recognise that guilt by learning at the same time to respect himself.

BUR: So how can I find out more?

SG: Buy the book.

BUR: Where?



Stephen Gray

SG: You mean "when?"

BUR: Why?

SG: I'm waiting for a publisher to pick it up.

BUR: I bet Alex Lungwicz hopes its not!

SG: What hope?

BUR: Good luck with the book sales!

Prestigious Legal Fellowship Awarded to Former High Court Associate

A Sydney-based legal practitioner, who has recently worked as an Associate to a High Court judge, has been awarded the prestigious Business Law Fellowship for 1998, advises the Law Council of Australia.

Mr Justin Hewitt, who is currently working for Freehill Hollingdale & Page will use the fellowship to study a Master of Laws at New York University Law School, beginning in August.

The Business Law Fellowship is an initiative of the Business Law Section of the LCA and, according to the Chairman of the Business Law Section, Mr Roger Featherston, this year attracted an exceptional field of candidates. This was the second time the scholarship had been offered, the first time being in 1996.

The winner had strong academic qualifications and a number of legal years' experience both at his firm and

as Associate to High Court Justice Gummow.

Mr Featherston suggested that Mr Hewitt, with the benefit of his study in New York could go on to become one of Australia's finest business law practitioners.

The scholarship was created to assist successful applicants in undertaking formal post graduate study in Australia or overseas. \$12,000 is granted to the successful applicant.