

A book review of [Smiley Face Fatigues: Reality dystopian tragicomic tales from 2020-21; by Brady Gunn; published by Brady Gunn; 2024.](#)

By Gary Scarrabelotti

Brady Gunn is a hero.

He is a hero because he did something remarkably simple yet potent in its implications: he stood in a park. He went there for only one hour, at the same time every Sunday, to protest the Covid madness just by *standing*.

Ultimately, Brady Gunn became so dangerous that he had to be exiled – literally, exiled – from his home in Sydney’s South.

Internal exile? Couldn’t be, you say. That’s a thing of far-off times. Think ancient Rome or, more nearly, Tsarist Russia.

Sorry, dear reader, I’m speaking of Australia today.

Brady Gunn’s “Stand in the Park” began on 13 September 2020 – and he stood there, in Sydney’s Hyde Park, every Sunday for the allotted hour, for the best part of three months, all alone.

After a month, he began broadcasting “lives” on Facebook. It took another two months of standings and “lives” before he was joined by two others. From there, Brady’s “Stand” took off. It spread across Australia, then to New Zealand and then far beyond. Eventually, there were thousands rallying to “Stands” in parks in over 30 countries.

Smiley Face Fatigues, written and published by Brady Gunn, is an account of how “A Stand in the Park” sprang to life.

Spiced with comedic moments, *Fatigues* is part biography, part prophecy. It falls into two sections: an introductory biography and the texts of Brady Gunn’s protest “lives” delivered over the period October 2020 to December 2021.

For my money, the better bit is the biographical opening. It’s very funny in parts. It’s also heart wrenching. We meet Brady the wild school kid, the death-defying teen, the stand-up comedian, the traveller, the entrepreneur and finally the prophet. We also meet a man who, at a certain point in life, was attacked by the Black Dog and who waged a long, ultimately successful, battle against it.

This struggle, and the self-mastery gained through it, is not a theme in a larger story. As it appears in these 245 pages, it is *the* story. Without Brady Gunn’s combat in the dark caverns of melancholia with his personal Balrog, the character who first took to a park against the Covid tyranny might not have been shaped.

What emerges from this trial is a character who has acquired an intuitive alertness to the presence of falsehood. It came to him through unmasking, and eventually expelling, an interior whisperer of lies – “The Voice”, as he calls it – which conjures up the melancholic

mood and invites to self-destruction those who attend to it.

That kind of close encounter with a falsifier hones the native instincts. Thereafter, they intuit fraud with an uncanny immediacy of vision. It was this that propelled Brady Gunn into what began as a lone Hyde Park stand.

He writes:

I was STOOD in that park by my intuition. It wasn't even like it was something I had to do; it was something that did me. [...] There wasn't any agenda behind it. I was just standing there waiting for [...] something to happen.

And, indeed, it did. Eventually, people rallied to him in crowds, both in our Oz and abroad.

What those crowds heard is captured in the "lives". As published here, untouched by major editing, these are a passionate Jeremiad: raw, often ingeniously phrased, frequently imaginative and commonly crude. Running through it all, is the Brady Gunn philosophy forged by the bleak years and his passage of arms with "The Voice."

There are moments when these "lives" vault into the esoteric. It's not always easy for the uninitiated to follow Brady there. Curious to learn more, I jumped into another of his books, [*The Art of Shhh*](#), a more polished, if less spontaneous, piece of writing which offers a clearer picture of what he learned from his struggle with the speaking shadow named Melancholy.

I'm glad I read *The Art*. It confirmed an instinctive sense that behind the Delphic utterances of *Fatigues* lies hard earned insights into our fragile humanity.

It's not my purpose here to expand on these. Read both books. Suffice it to say that the recurring theme in the bio and the "lives" is a red-hot conviction that we should know the truth about ourselves and the truth about the 'truths' thrust upon us by Earthly Powers.

To which end, Brady Gunn adopts the imperative mood. To his audiences, both "in the physical" and on-line, particularly to the hesitant and uncommitted, he speaks with command. Start digging! Discover for yourselves! Understand the shonkiness of the Covid narrative! "Get off the fence"!

In another place ...

Knock, knock. You in there? Figured it out yet?

There's no out-of-the-ordinary Covid death toll. Vaccines don't protect or "stop the spread". But vax injuries are clear to see and rising.

Lockdowns are killing small-business and destroying the middle class – "on purpose." A huge upward wealth-transfer is underway. "They're stealing your money." Vaccine passports are only a beginning. CBDs are on the way to seal your enslavement.

I know you don't want to see it. [...] I know you don't want to admit it [...] because they are laughing at you [...] They are sitting in their gilded towers, laughing, chomping their cigars, saying, 'I cannot believe they bought this.'

As one might expect of a prophet, he's hard on those with neither ears to hear nor eyes to see. As Brady beat up on these chronical fence-sitters, some mighty words from the Book of the Apocalypse recurred to me:

... because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit thee out of my mouth.

It's a pity that to sustain his rhetoric Brady Gunn doesn't draw upon a higher language. All too often, he falls back upon four-lettered exclamations.

Words have power: power for good or power for ill; power to shed light or power to spread darkness. The problem with the expletives to which we commonly revert in moments of anger, frustration, perplexity is this: they have exclamative force, but they fail as explanatives. They tell us nothing of which we speak. Where we need light, they call up the darkness.

Another thing. In his writing, Brady Gunn expresses impatience with the "words, labels and meanings" that we attach to things. They jump into action from our rational side (which he suspects) and not from our intuitive side (which he esteems).

I reckon it's a mistake to regard reason and intuition as contrary forces. They are different faculties of knowing exercised by the intelligence that each of us possesses.

Now, Brady Gunn's impatience is fair enough, if the objective is restricted to brushing off the nagging, ratiocinating voices of our demons within. Don't engage! That's golden advice.

When, however, it comes to speaking about ourselves or the world at large, we inescapably need "words", "labels", "meanings" and "speculations". Without them, we can't say anything intelligible. Our need is not to reject them but continually to refine them so that what we say and write aligns more closely with the true.

It's more than a common phenomenon that, having doubted the value of "words" and "meanings," speakers continue to speak and writers continue to write. Their starting hypothesis can't survive, in practice, the experiment of real life. Words work, after all. They have power.

Anyway, what I find convincing about *Fatigues* is the big picture. Yes, it's dashed with colour and sounds of hyperbole, but it does not deceive. As I say, it has a prophetic voice. Two instances stand out.

In his "live" of 21 June 2021, Brady Gunn let fly the claim that getting vaxed risked getting "genetically modified".

Outrageous!

Jump forward, however, to February 2023. That's when world-renowned genetics expert, Kevin McKernan, confirmed DNA contamination in those batches of Pfizer's Comirnaty

most associated with vaccine injuries. Subsequent work by McKernan and others has established that this contamination can enter the cell nucleus which contains our personal DNA.

So, what happens then? Well, I'm only a layman, but DNA contaminants 'breaking and entering' the house where our DNA lives sends shivers down my spine. Yours too, I'd hope.

Well, with that Brady Gunn foresight confirmed, I was sobered later in *Fatigues* to read this:

... you've got to understand what's about to happen. These people are not going to watch us walk around in a circle waving a cheeky sign and then say, 'Oh, all right, we're sorry. Here's the world back. We didn't mean it.'

I hadn't positively thought otherwise. But to see laid out in black and white an idea that had yet to be born as conviction stopped me in my tracks. More grimness sighted ahead.

Maybe "prophet" is too solemn, too portentous, a term to use. We live in prosaic times, ungraced by inspiration. So be it. Let's wind the language back a notch. Perhaps Brady Gunn is not a prophet but a punter.

Alright then, if you read *Fatigues*, you'll find that our man has been, in fact, quite a successful punter – but a punter whose skill reaches far beyond the ordinary objects and purposes of placing a bet.

Have a read. See what you think.

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