

BWVC

BENDIGO
WRITERS'
COUNCIL



EXPLORE THE WORLD OF WRITING IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Scenes from the May Writers Explore with Dr Ian Irvine (Hobson) by Kev Stacey

The Writers Explore workshop on Wednesday May 17th, 2017 (or possibly 2317 AD in the origin world?) provided a winning combination of an intelligent and engaging speaker and a collection of fertile minds for great ideas and creativity.

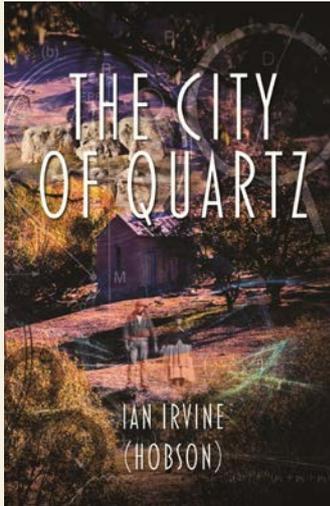
Dr. Ian Irvine – a.k.a. Ian Hobson, his *nom de plume* – treated us to a challenging yet interesting and inspiring workshop on writing speculative fiction, especially sci-fi. Points of focus included the trope of simulated or programmed universes and virtual reality, and that of parallel universes and alternative selves and histories.

The former trope prompted plenty of discussion. It was suggested that we ourselves might be living in a simulated reality and the present in the origin world is the twenty-fourth century, or 300-plus years into what would be the future for someone living in 2017, as per Nick Bostrom's Simulated Universe Hypothesis. Evidence presented of this was moments of *déjà vu* and other "glitches in the Matrix". Speaking of which, *The Matrix* movies rated a mention because of their use of the virtual reality/simulated world trope, though the trope was used in the British sci-fi sitcom *Red Dwarf* several years earlier, in the episodes "Better Than Life" and "Back To Reality". Quite a few interesting and clever ideas were expressed on this topic, especially the ideas for narratives, and I hope they come to fruition.

The latter trope – particularly, one self meeting another self, and both those selves having actually taken potential paths that the actual self did not – was a little more challenging, inviting introspection and self-reflection, though just as rewarding, especially in terms of the scenarios people came up with. (Your humble correspondent fruitlessly racked his brain before an idea just came to him in the last ten minutes of the workshop – something involving me as a policeman meeting me as a country musician during a drug search of the tour bus). Again, some great and entertaining ideas were expressed.

Ian has published novels, short stories, poetry and non-fiction. His latest work is *The City of Quartz*.

FEEDBACK FROM IAN: "THERE WAS A REAL CREATIVE BUZZ IN THE ROOM AND PEOPLE OF ALL AGES ETC. WERE PRESENT. THAT'S WHAT CREATIVITY SHOULD DO – BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER AROUND IDEAS/NEW WAYS OF LOOKING AT THE WORLD AND OUT PLACE IN IT."



The City of Quartz by Ian Irvine (Hobson)

"Rowan Sweeney is a thirty-three year old perpetual student with relationship and vocational issues. Out of desperation he takes a job with Douglass Green - a Doctor of 'something or other', publisher of 'curios', and New Age therapist living in Central Victoria. Rowan soon discovers Green has a hidden agenda involving Neo-Druidism, Alchemy, cricket, music, obscure languages, and a quantum computer. Asked to write a biography about Abraham Isles, 'an important 19th Century convict-mystic', Rowan quickly realises he's in over his head ... literally.

The novel is partially set in an Alternative Australia where the European colonisation of the continent took a different path early in the 1830s. The novel explores themes related to: the place of creativity in life and society, the impact of colonisation on indigenous peoples, New Science notions of self-identity, creativity and physical reality, and the age old conflict between Materialism and sacred views of the cosmos.



It is also a story about love and assuming adult responsibilities in our complex post-modern world." - from [Barnes and Noble \(US\)](#).

'The City of Quartz' is the new novel by Ian Irvine (Hobson). Available online from Amazon, Barnes and Noble (US), Booktopia, Book Depository, etc.. See also [Songs of the Interstitium Transmedia Project](#).



Extract from 'A Message from Our President: Annie Young'¹

Hello All

Our recent BWC meeting was buzzing with ideas. Our guest speaker was Ian Irvine, author, poet and lecturer at Victoria University and Bendigo TAFE in creative writing.

A number of Ian's students came to listen to

Ian as he spoke of ways to expand our imaginations and write in the genre of speculative fiction.

The enthusiasm of his students was infectious and they were clearly on his wave length as he explored ideas such as programmed universes; quantum physics and the paranormal; and alternative selves /histories.

I loved the energy that echoed around the room as Ian set us writing tasks to stretch our imaginations.

Good writing and reading everyone.

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